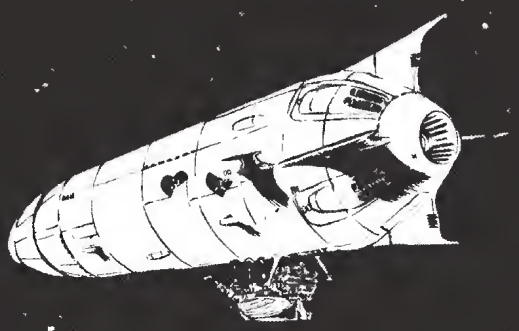
LEIJI MATSUMOTO'S

Queen Emeraldas

VOLUME 1

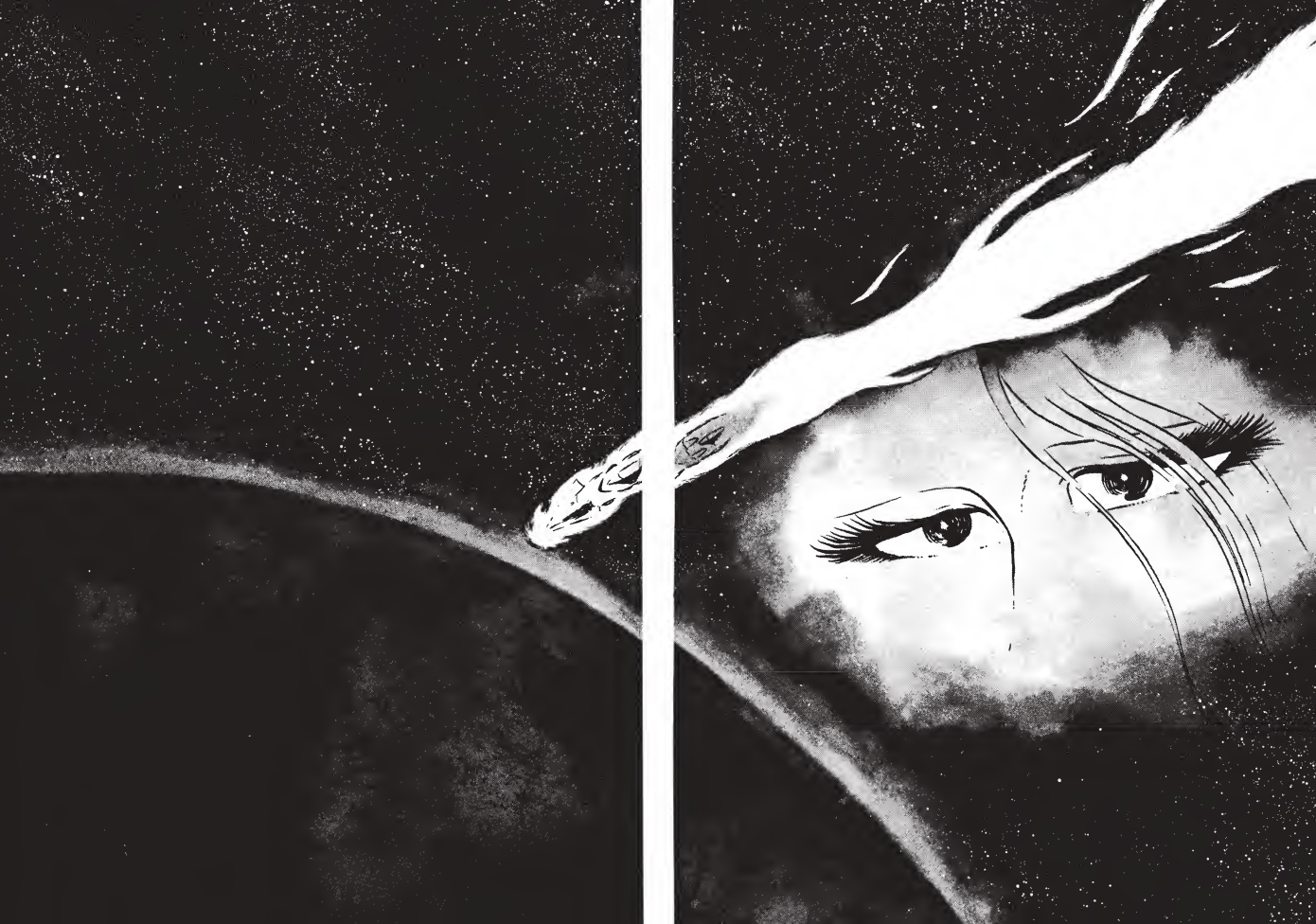
LEIJI MATSUMOTO PRESENTS



QUEEN EMERALDAS VOL. 1

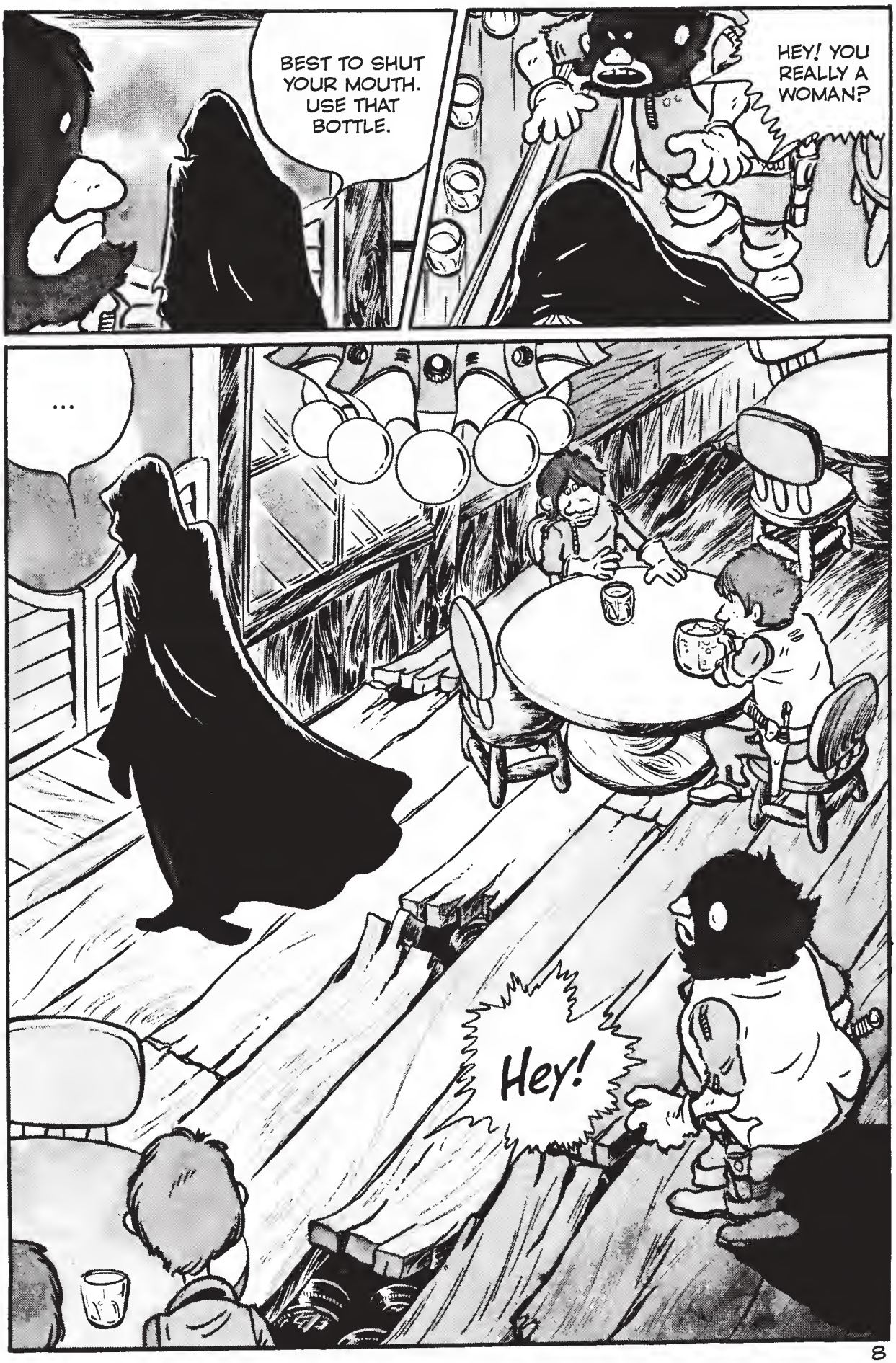
QUEEN EMERALDAS

WARNING!!... CLASS D SHIP MISCALCULATED ENTRY NEAR DEIMOS ORBIT!! OUT OF GRAVITATIONAL ALIGNMENT!
ESTIMATED IMPACT POINT: NORTHERN ARGYRE PLANITIA, CENTRAL GORGES.

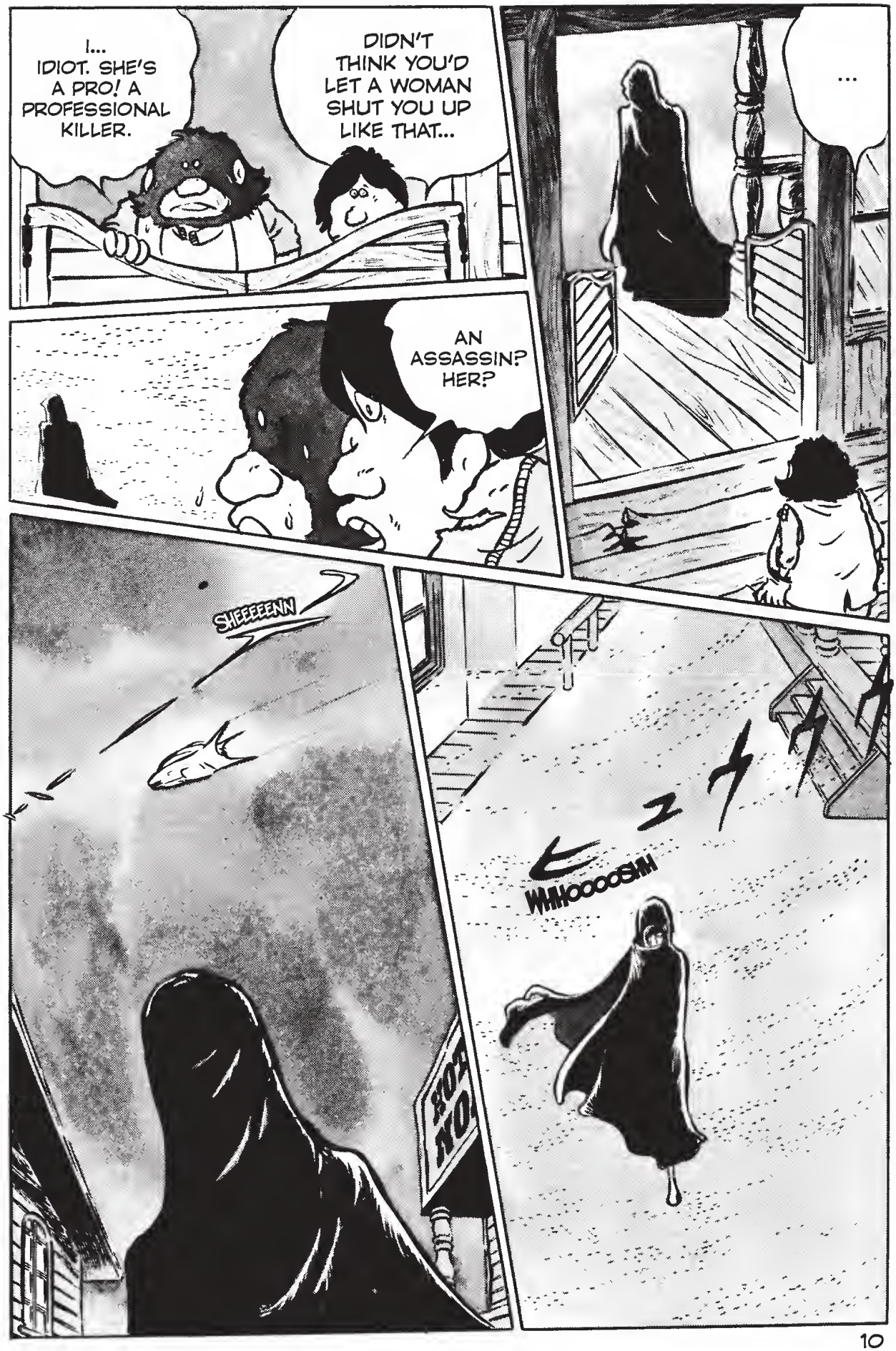


HOTEL
NOACH
ZEA

YEAH.
THERE'S THE SHOCK WAVE.
PING
PING
PING
WHOA! YA THINK THE ATMOSPHERIC REGULATOR'LL CONTAIN IT?
NICE LANDING, DIPSTICK.
THEY DEAD?
HEH. WE'RE ALL DEAD 'ROUND HERE!
JUS' GOTTA MAKE MY PILE BEFORE I FILL MY GRAVE.
YOU TOO, RIGHT, PARTNER?
DRINK? THIS HERE'S PURE VENUSIAN HIGH-PRESSURE WHISKEY.
NO!
WHAT THE...? A LADY?

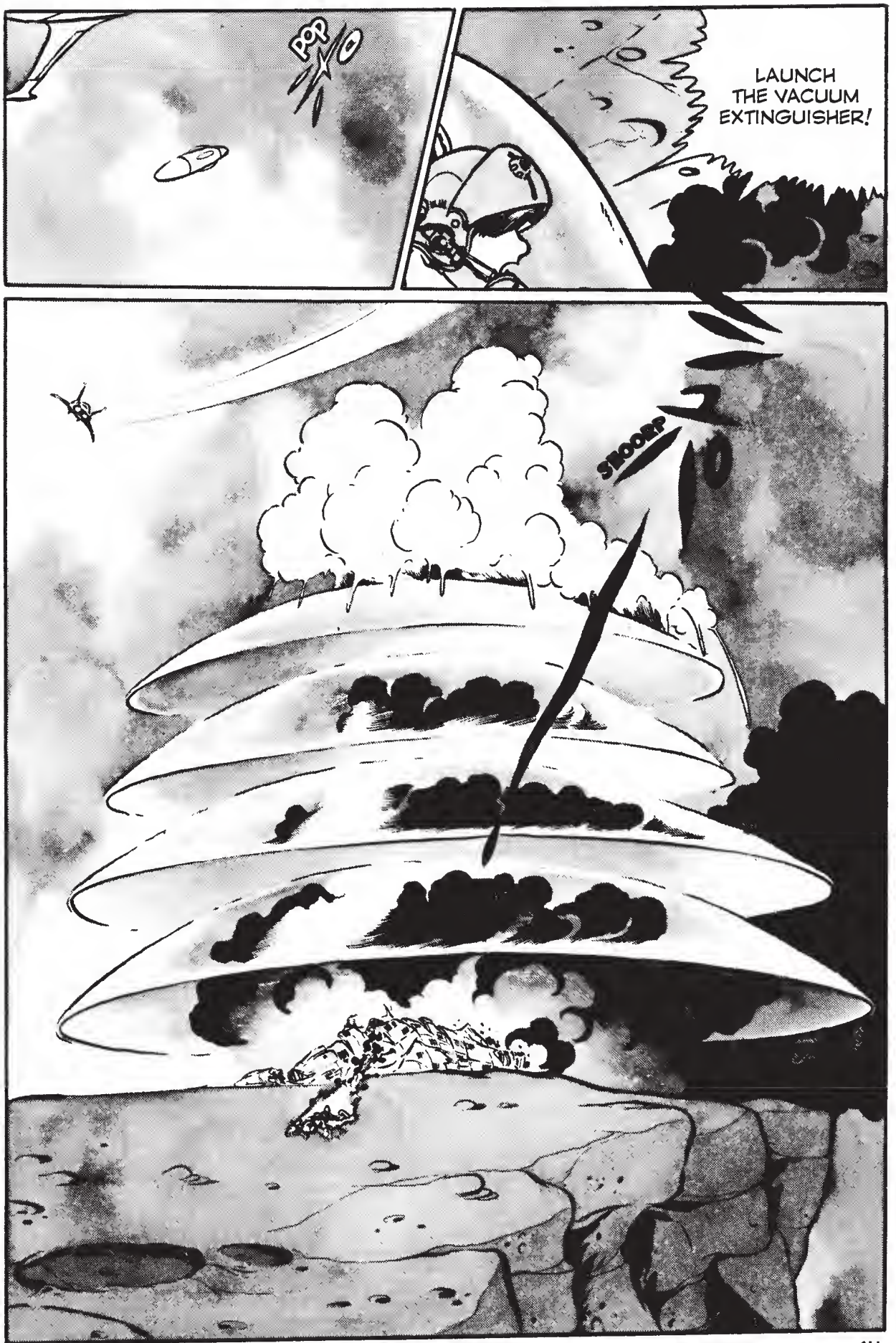

BEST TO SHUT YOUR MOUTH. USE THAT BOTTLE.
HEY! YOU REALLY A WOMAN?
...
Hey!

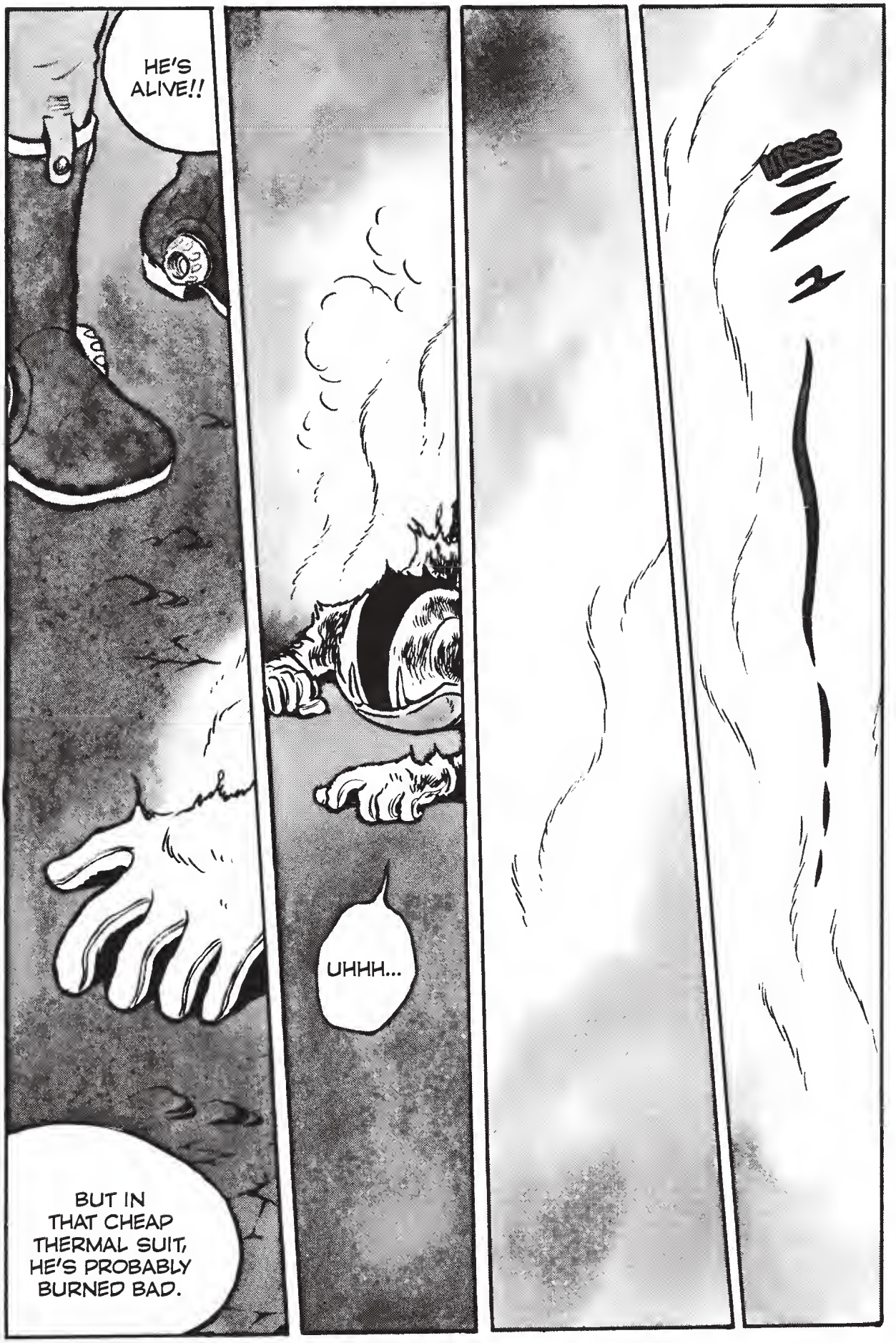
OR DO
WE HAVE
BUSINESS?

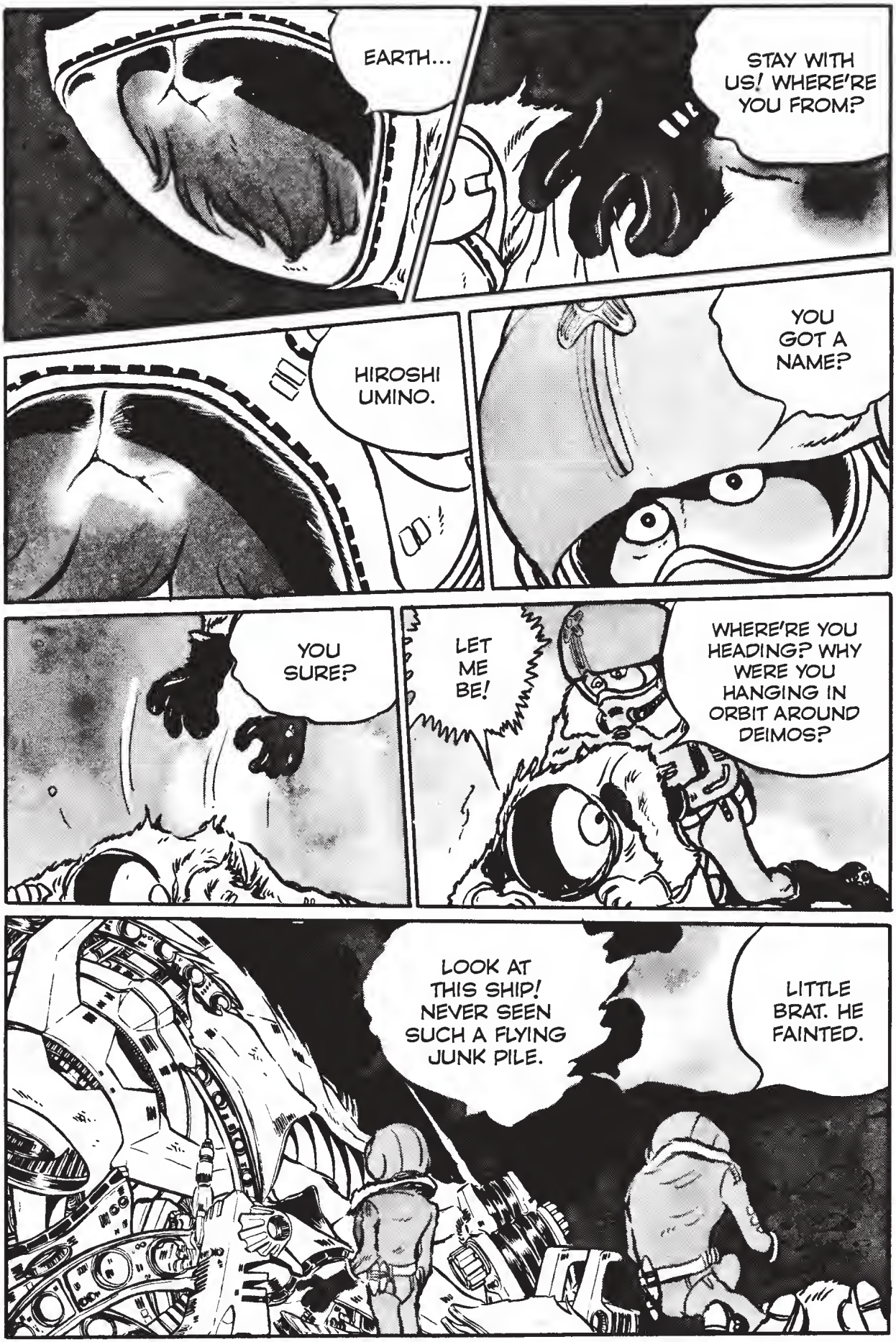

I... IDIOT. SHE'S A PRO! A PROFESSIONAL KILLER.
DIDN'T THINK YOU'D LET A WOMAN SHUT YOU UP LIKE THAT...
...
AN ASSASSIN? HER?
SHEEEEENN
WHHOOOOSHH

SHEEEEENNN
WHAT FOOL SAID THEY MADE IT TO THE CENTRAL GORGES? SHIP SMACKED INTO THE NORTHERN CLIFFS.
GEERRRNN

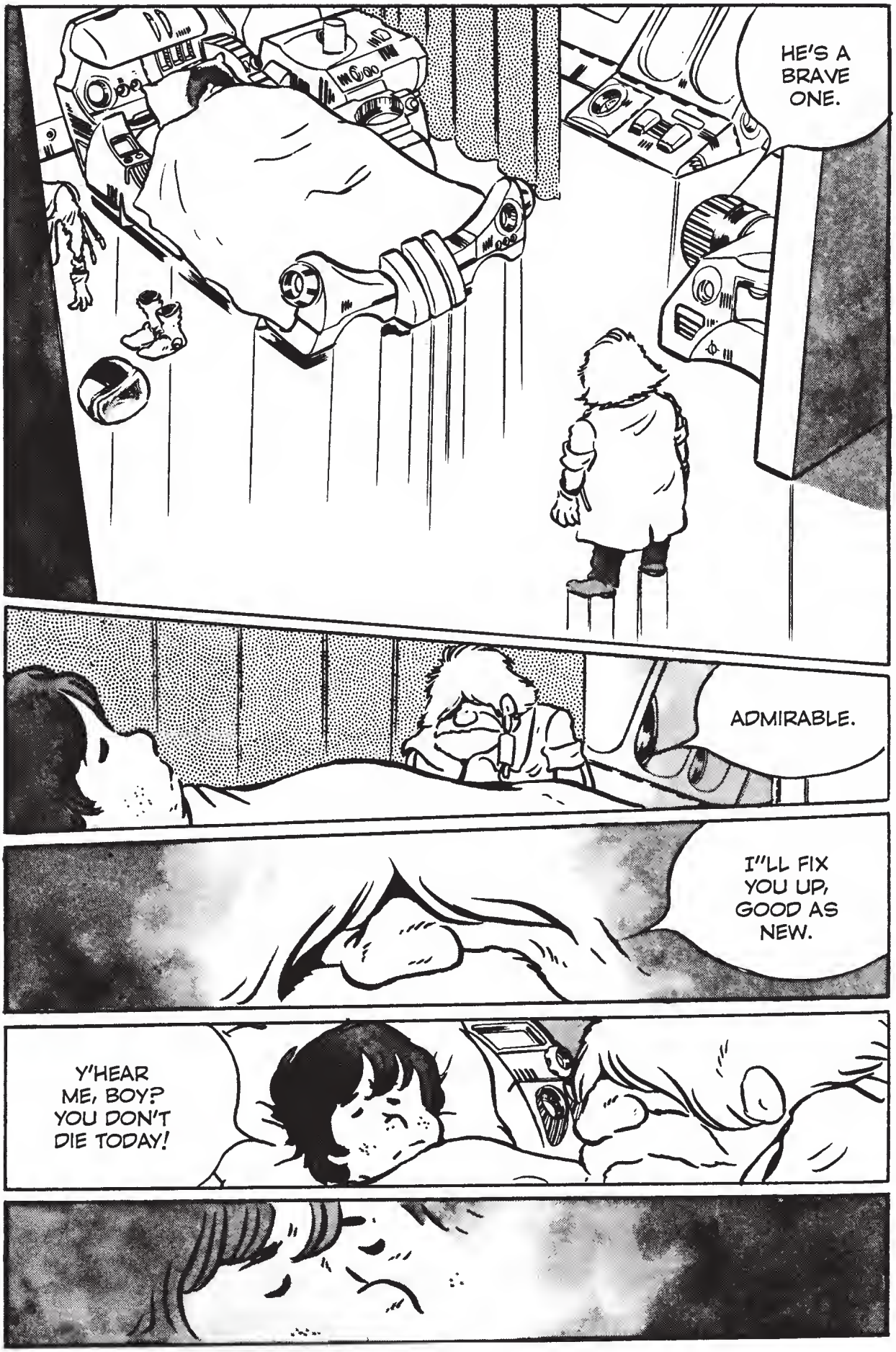
FWOOARR
FSSSHHH

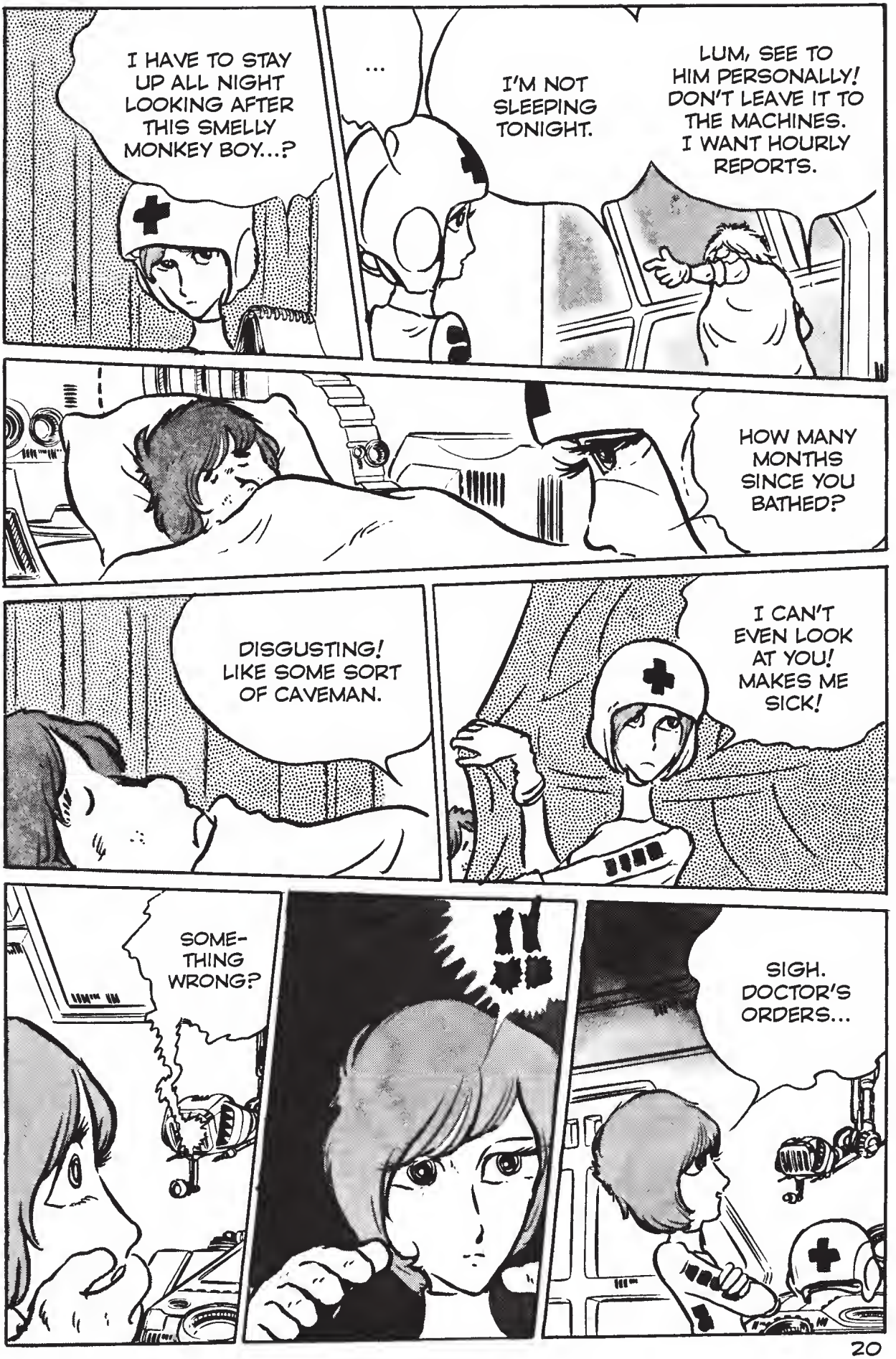

POP
LAUNCH THE VACUUM EXTINGUISHER!
SHOOSH

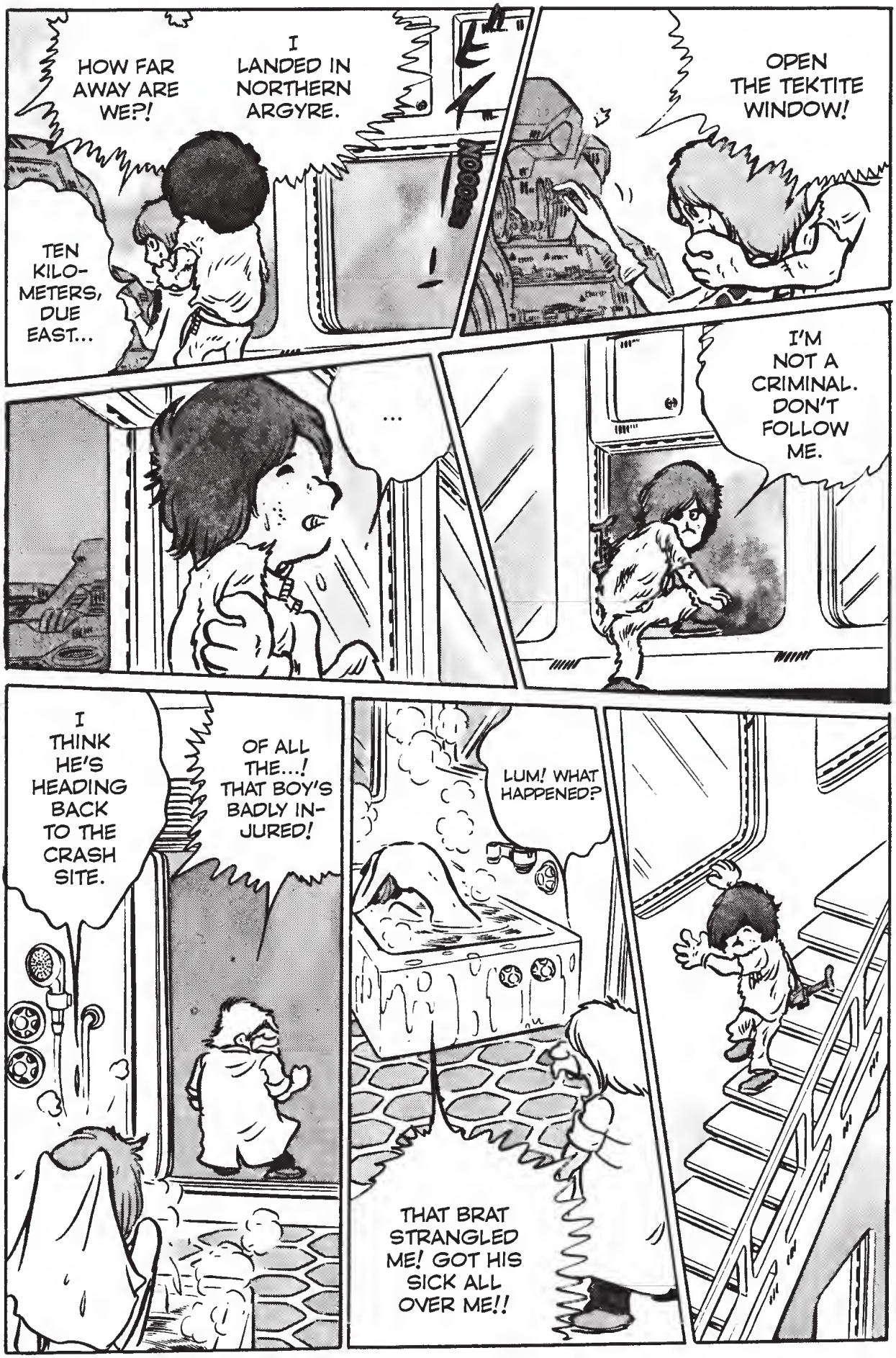

HE'S ALIVE!!
UHHH...
BUT IN THAT CHEAP THERMAL SUIT, HE'S PROBABLY BURNED BAD.

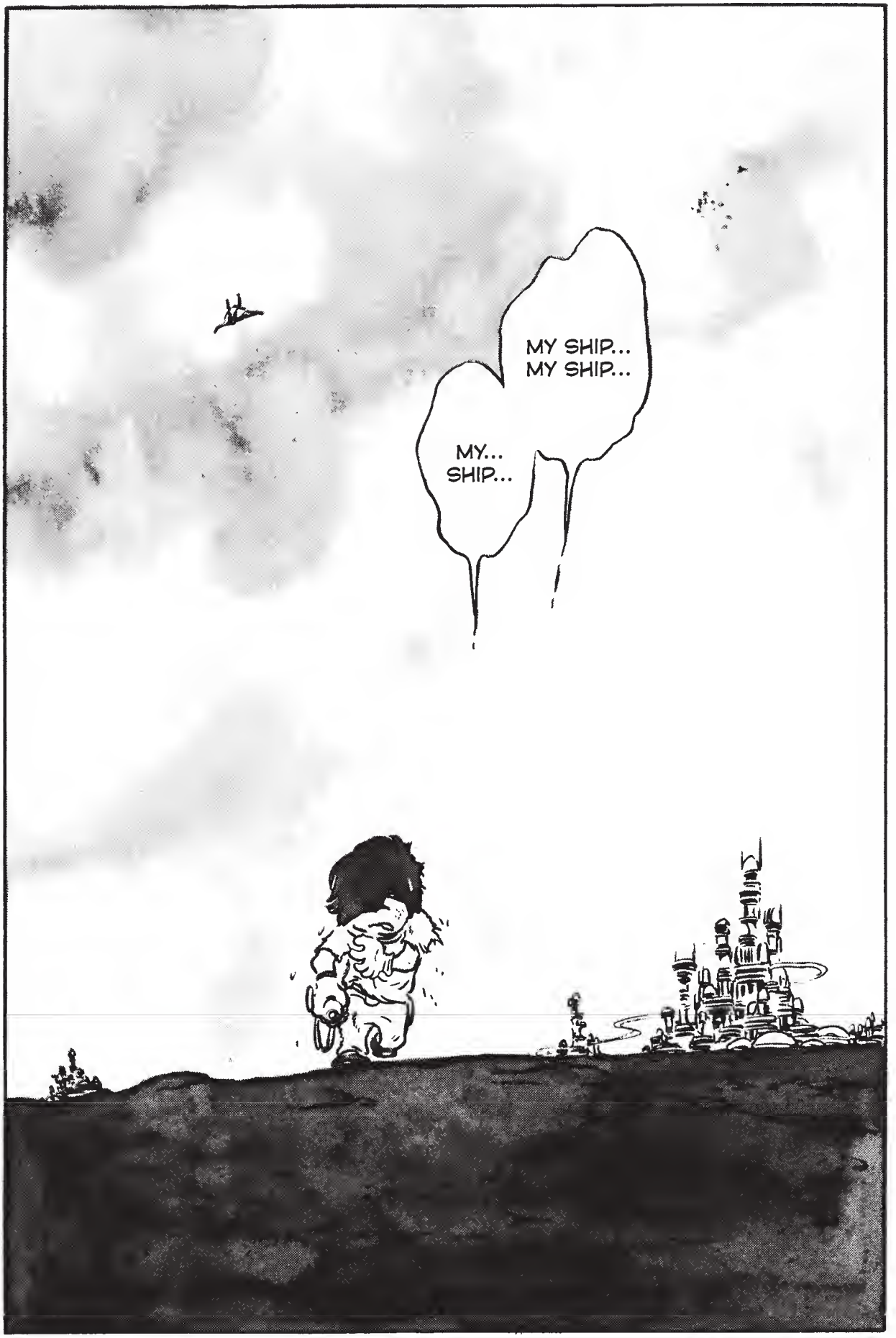

EARTH...
STAY WITH US! WHERE'RE YOU FROM?
HIROSHI UMINO.
YOU GOT A NAME?
YOU SURE?
LET ME BE!
WHERE'RE YOU HEADING? WHY WERE YOU HANGING IN ORBIT AROUND DEIMOS?
LOOK AT THIS SHIP! NEVER SEEN SUCH A FLYING JUNK PILE.
LITTLE BRAT. HE FAINTED.

HE STINKS.
HOW'S THE KID?
I DIDN'T ASK YOU HOW HE SMELLS! WHAT'S HIS CONDITION?!
WELL... HIS SHAPE'S ABNORMAL. STUBBY LEGS ON A LONG BODY. BUT HIS HEART'S UNBELIEVABLY TOUGH.
NO CRIMINAL RECORD.
THAT'S GOOD.
THE INVESTIGATORS SAY IT'S ESSENTIALLY A RAFT.
A HOME-MADE SHIP...


HE'S A BRAVE ONE.
ADMIRABLE.
I"LL FIX YOU UP, GOOD AS NEW.
Y'HEAR ME, BOY? YOU DON'T DIE TODAY!

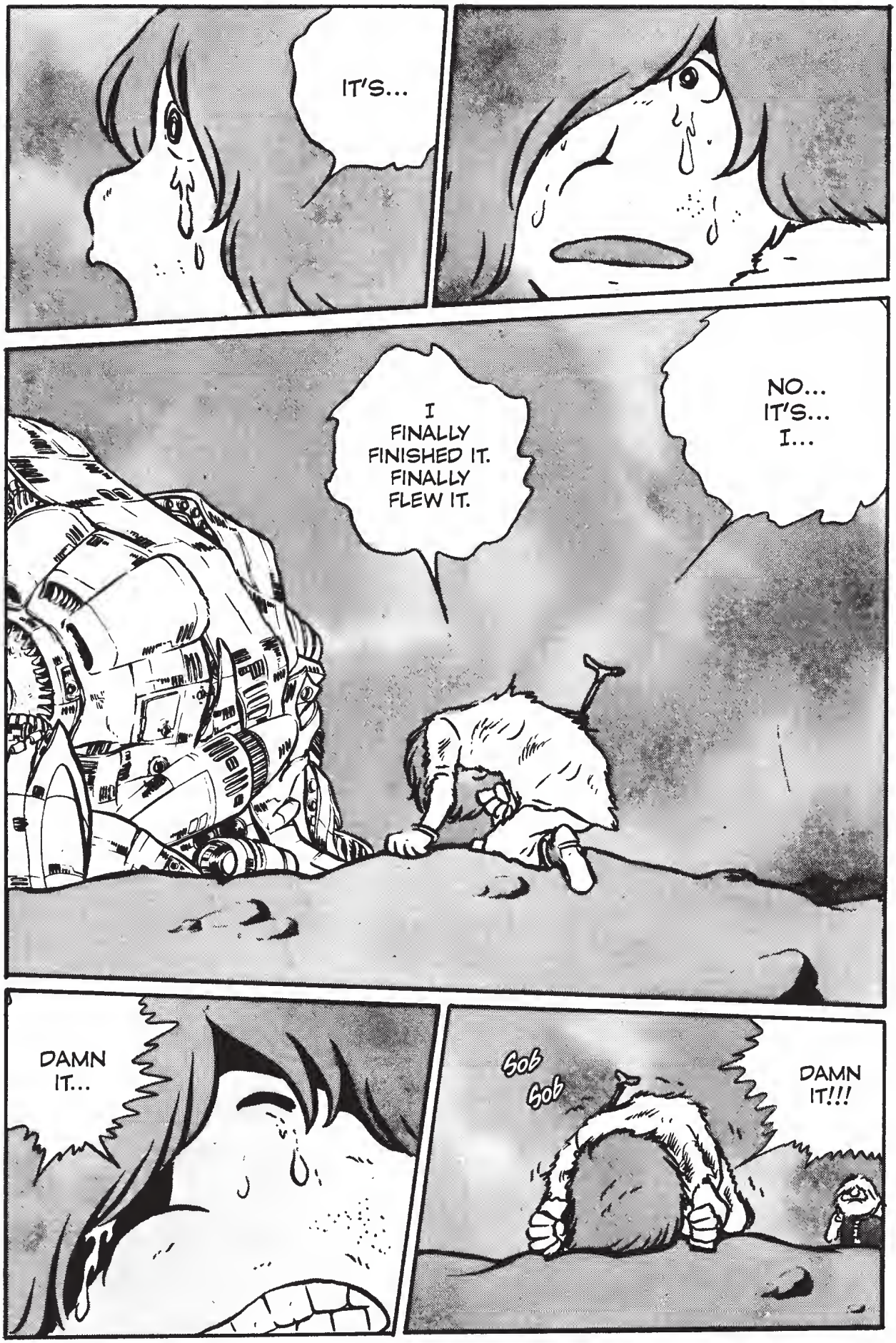

I HAVE TO STAY UP ALL NIGHT LOOKING AFTER THIS SMELLY MONKEY BOY...?
...
I'M NOT SLEEPING TONIGHT.
LUM, SEE TO HIM PERSONALLY! DON'T LEAVE IT TO THE MACHINES. I WANT HOURLY REPORTS.
HOW MANY MONTHS SINCE YOU BATHED?
DISGUSTING! LIKE SOME SORT OF CAVEMAN.
I CAN'T EVEN LOOK AT YOU! MAKES ME SICK!
SOME-THING WRONG?
!!
SIGH. DOCTOR'S ORDERS...

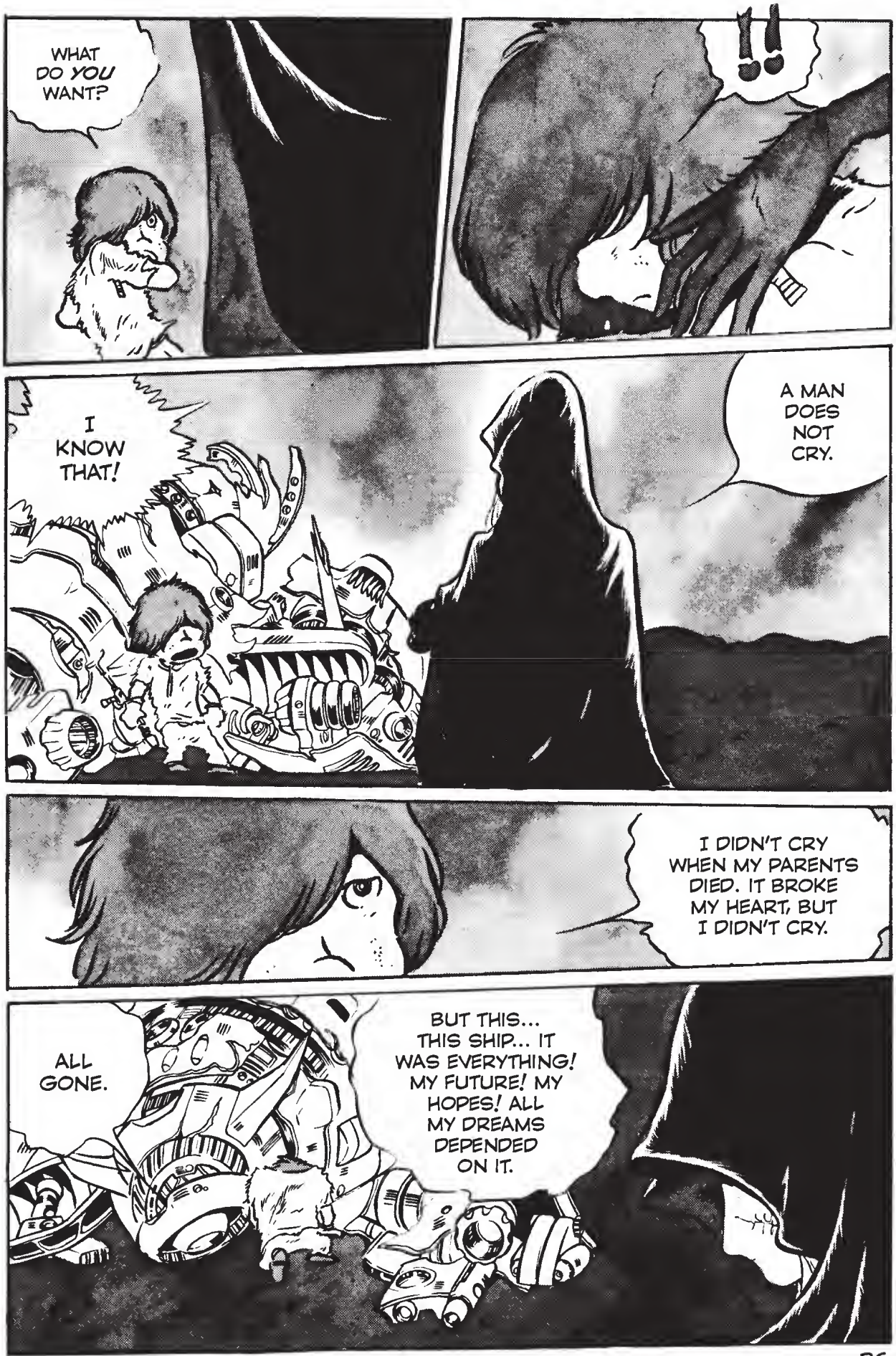

HOW FAR AWAY ARE WE?!
I LANDED IN NORTHERN ARGYRE.
KOOOM
TEN KILO-METERS, DUE EAST...
OPEN THE TEKTITE WINDOW!
...
I'M NOT A CRIMINAL. DON'T FOLLOW ME.
I THINK HE'S HEADING BACK TO THE CRASH SITE.
OF ALL THE...! THAT BOY'S BADLY IN-JURED!
LUM! WHAT HAPPENED?
THAT BRAT STRANGLED ME! GOT HIS SICK ALL OVER ME!!


MY SHIP...
MY SHIP...
MY...
SHIP...

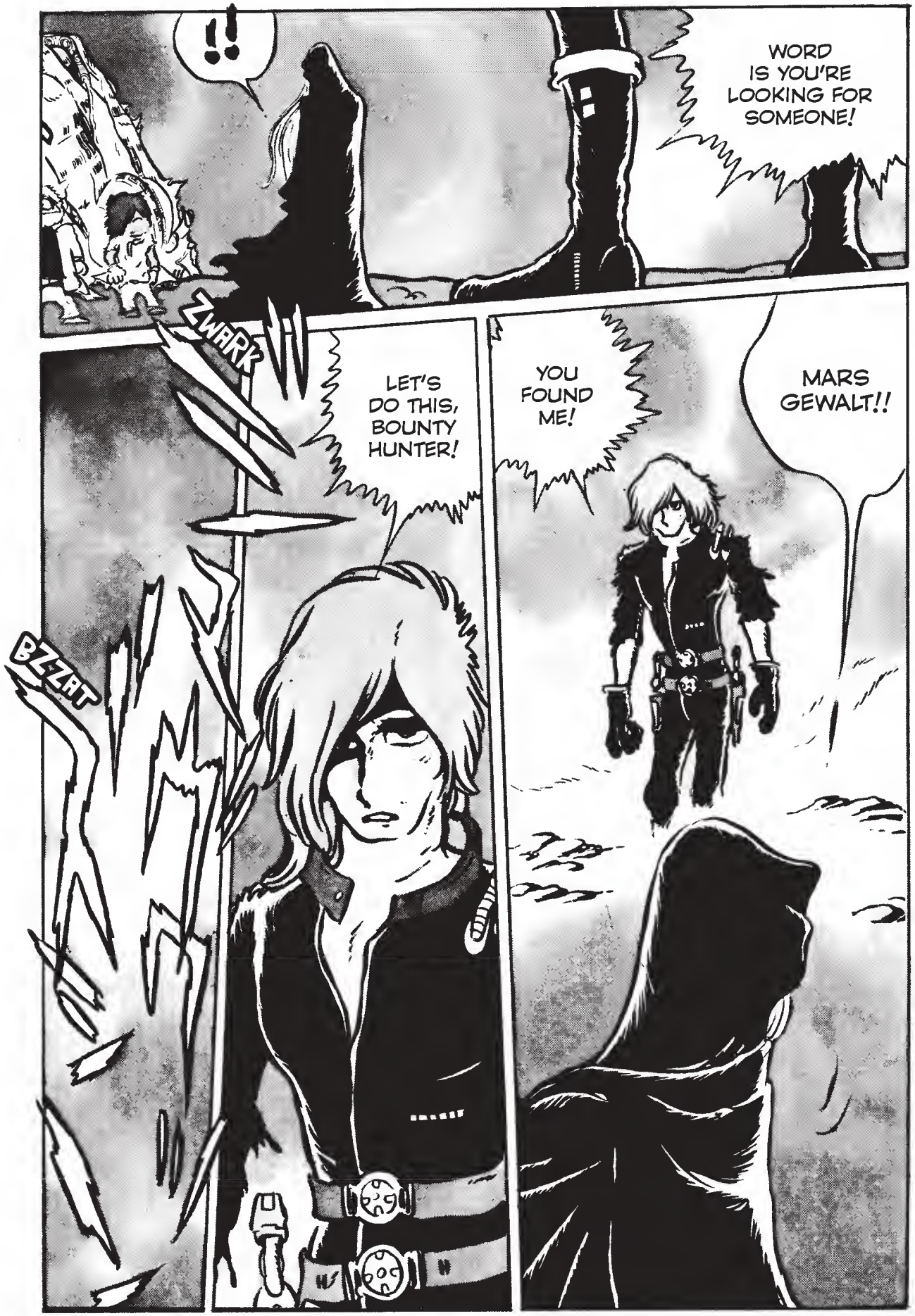
HANG ON.
SHEEEERN
Huff
Huff
Uhnn
NOBODY TELLS ME WHAT TO DO...
I CAN TAKE CARE OF MYSELF.
LEAVE ME ALONE!
MY SHIP...
LEAN ON ME.
WE'LL GO TOGETHER.
...
I UNDER-STAND. IT'S OK.

MY...
SHIP...
My ship!!!


IT'S...
I FINALLY FINISHED IT. FINALLY FLEW IT.
NO... IT'S... I...
DAMN IT...
Sob Sob
DAMN IT!!!

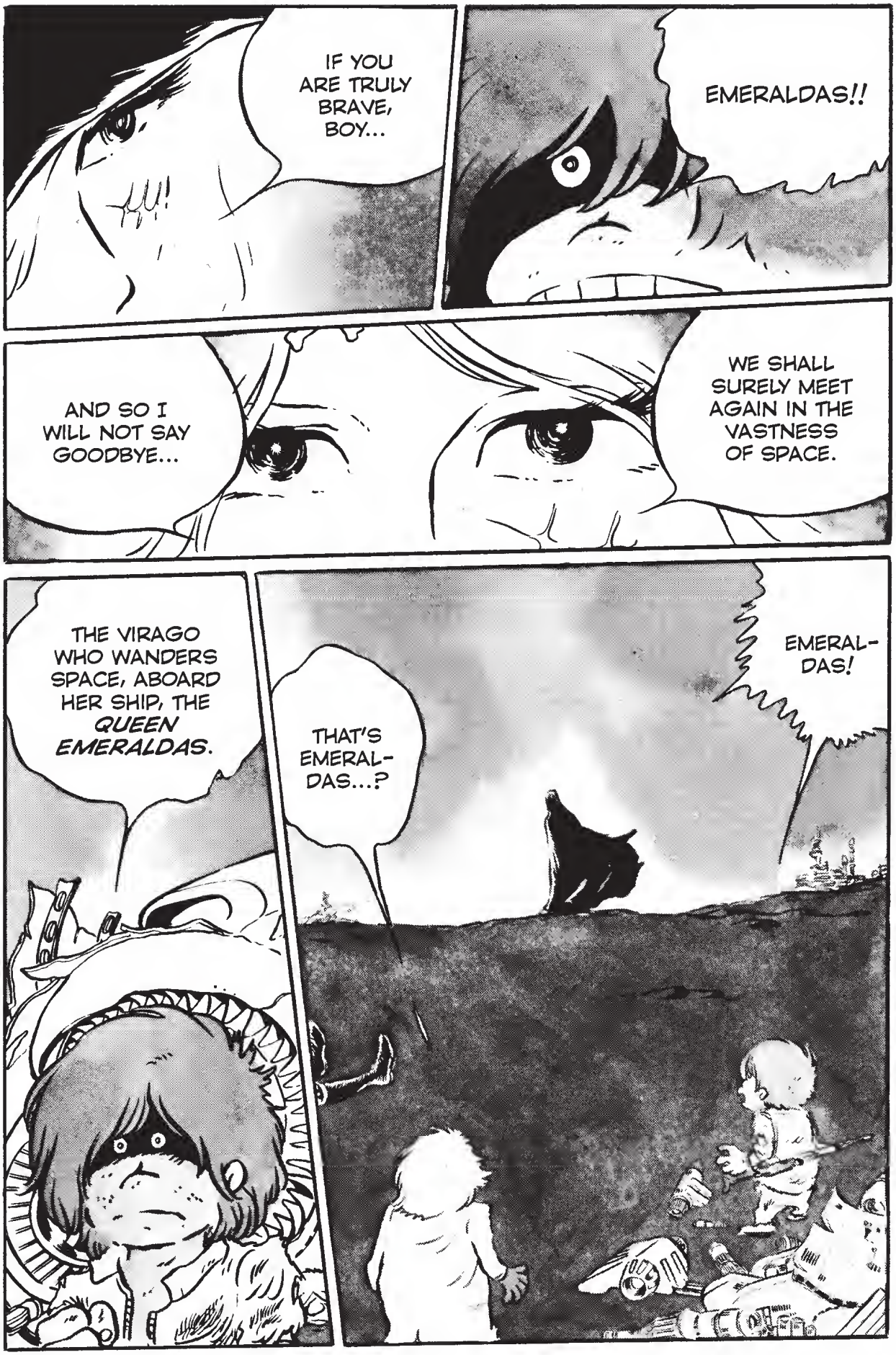

WHAT DO YOU WANT?
!!
I KNOW THAT!
A MAN DOES NOT CRY.
I DIDN'T CRY WHEN MY PARENTS DIED. IT BROKE MY HEART, BUT I DIDN'T CRY.
ALL GONE.
BUT THIS... THIS SHIP... IT WAS EVERYTHING! MY FUTURE! MY HOPES! ALL MY DREAMS DEPENDED ON IT.

NOW I HAVE TO START OVER!
I WORKED TO THE BONE ON THIS SHIP. I PUT ALL I HAD INTO IT.
DON'T ASK THAT! IT'S THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IN THE WORLD TO ME!
WHY DO YOU NEED A SHIP SO BADLY?
SOMEONE LIKE YOU... A WOMAN... COULD NEVER UNDERSTAND!!
I SEE...

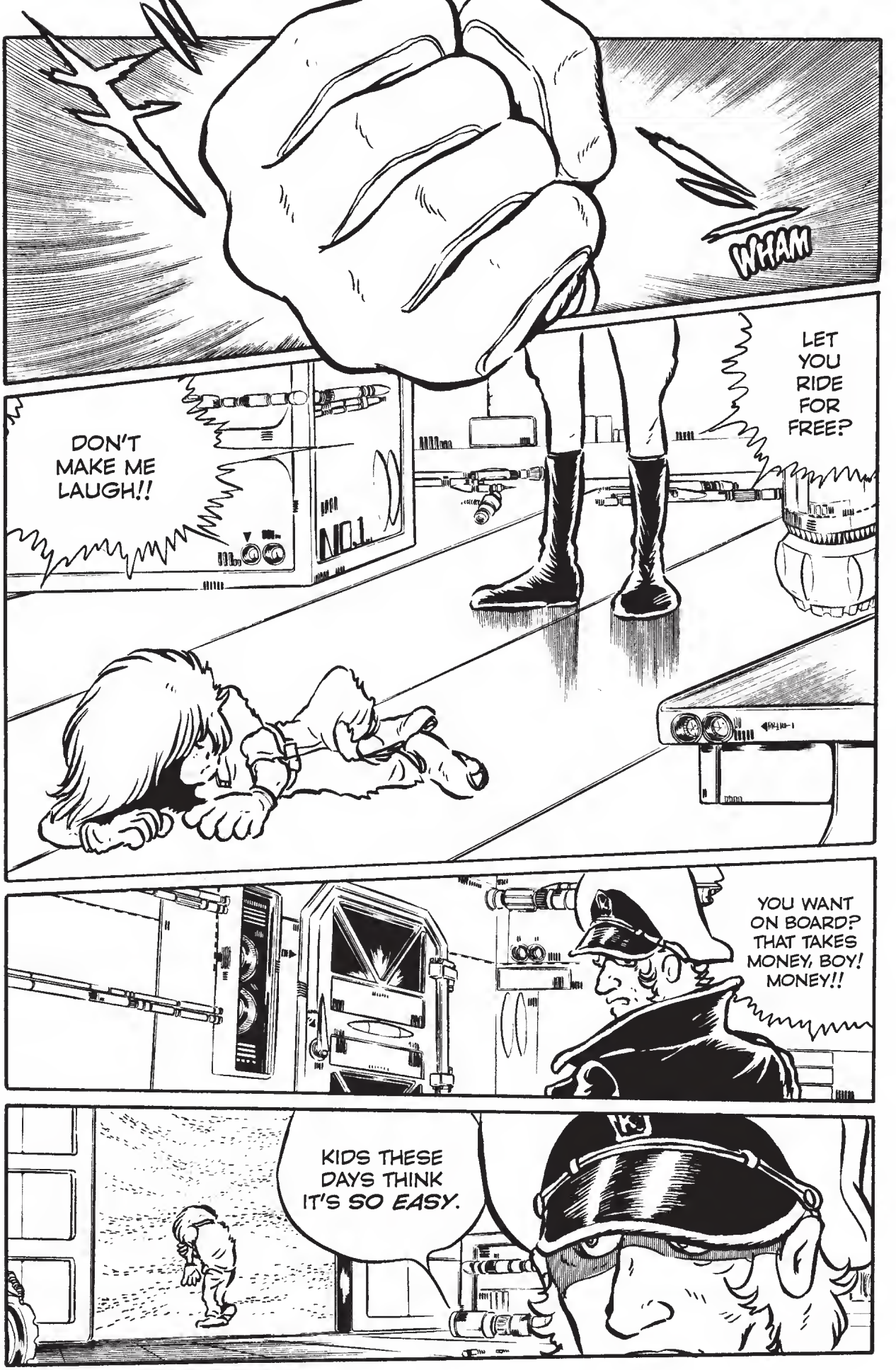

!!
WORD IS YOU'RE LOOKING FOR SOMEONE!
ZWARK
LET'S DO THIS, BOUNTY HUNTER!
BZZAT
YOU FOUND ME!
MARS GEWALT!!

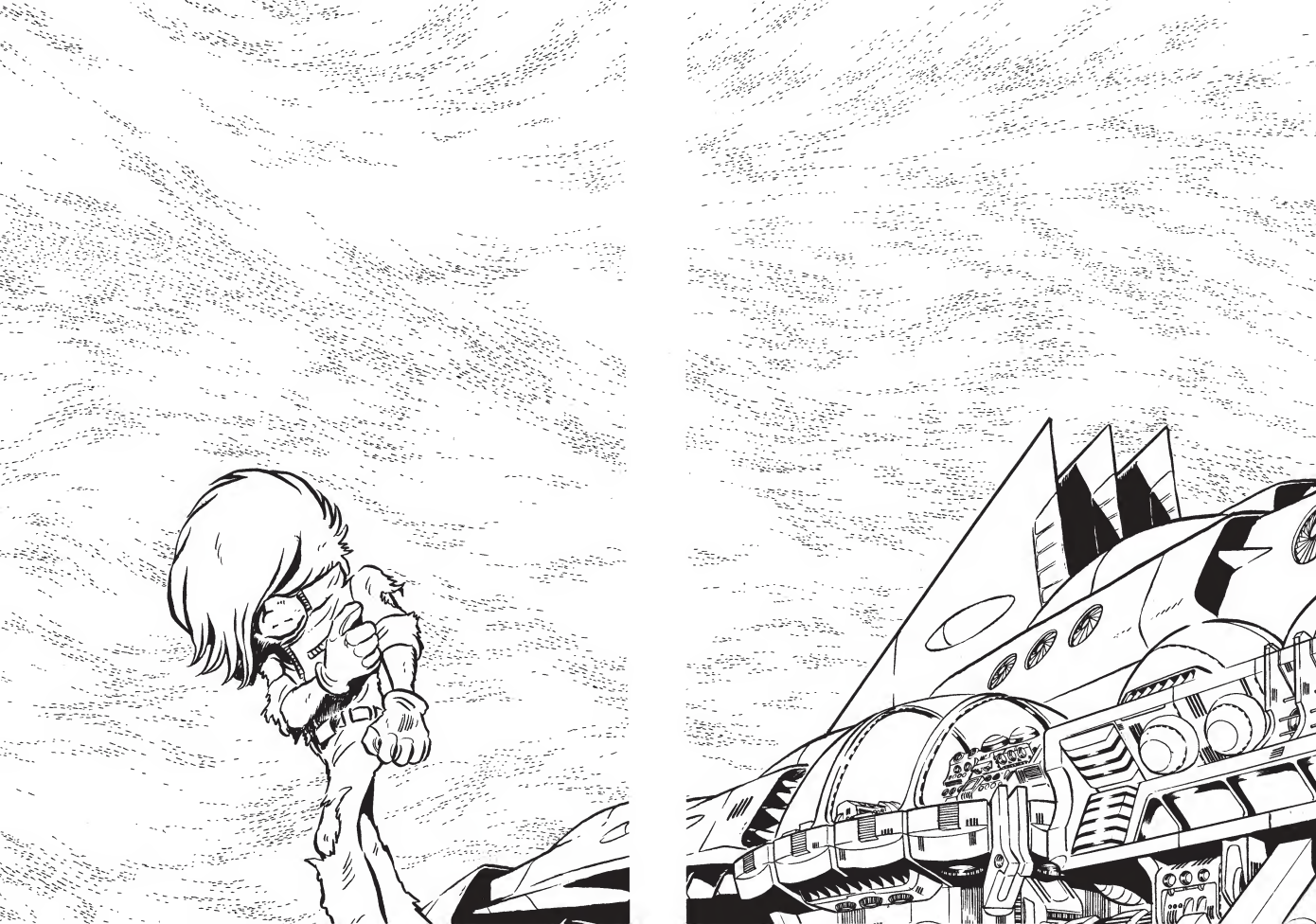
YOU WERE STRONG. BUT NOT STRONG ENOUGH...
...
YOU WEREN'T THE ONE I WAS LOOKING FOR...
GEWALT ...
WHO ARE YOU?!
...

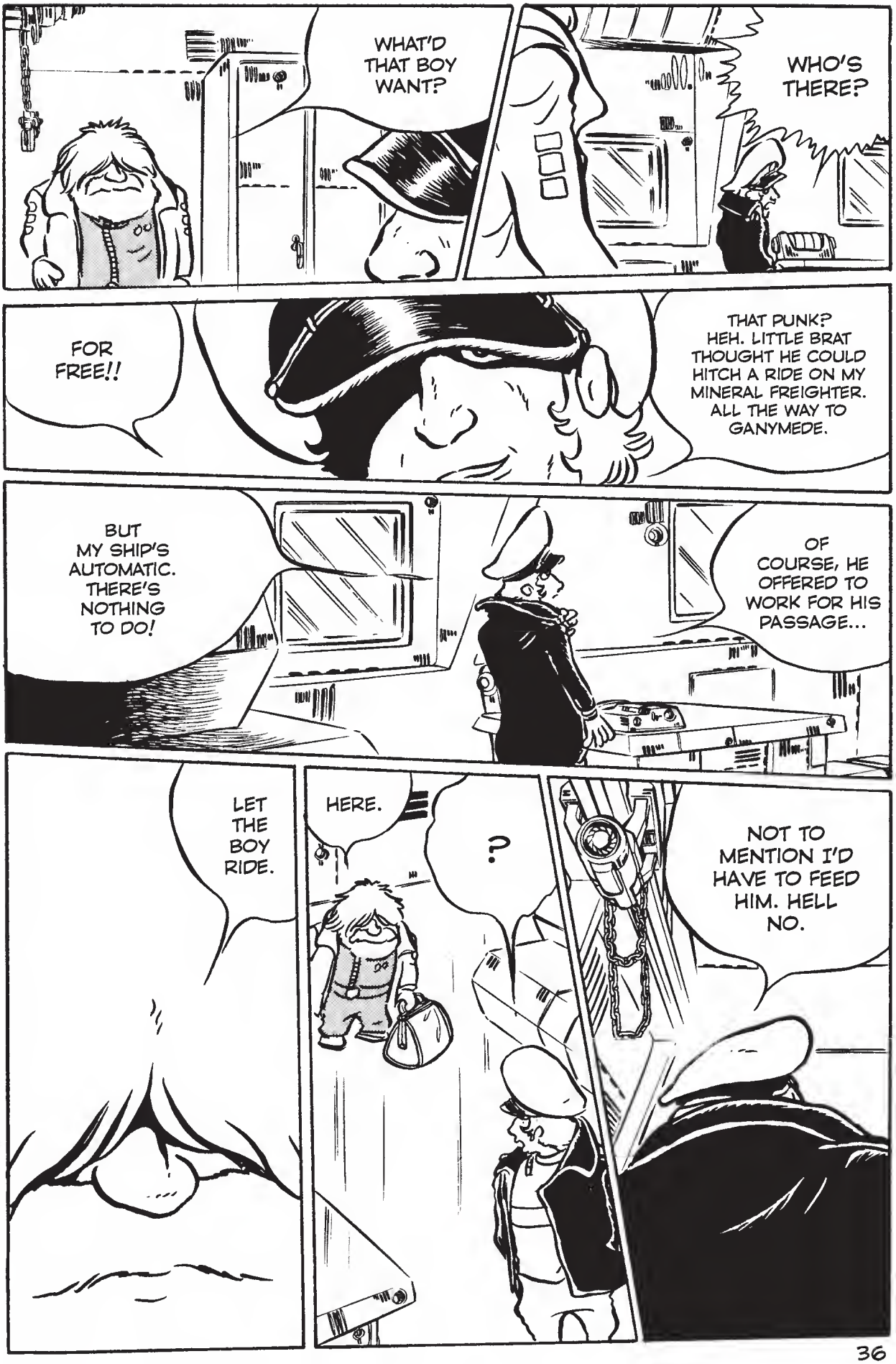
EMERALDAS.

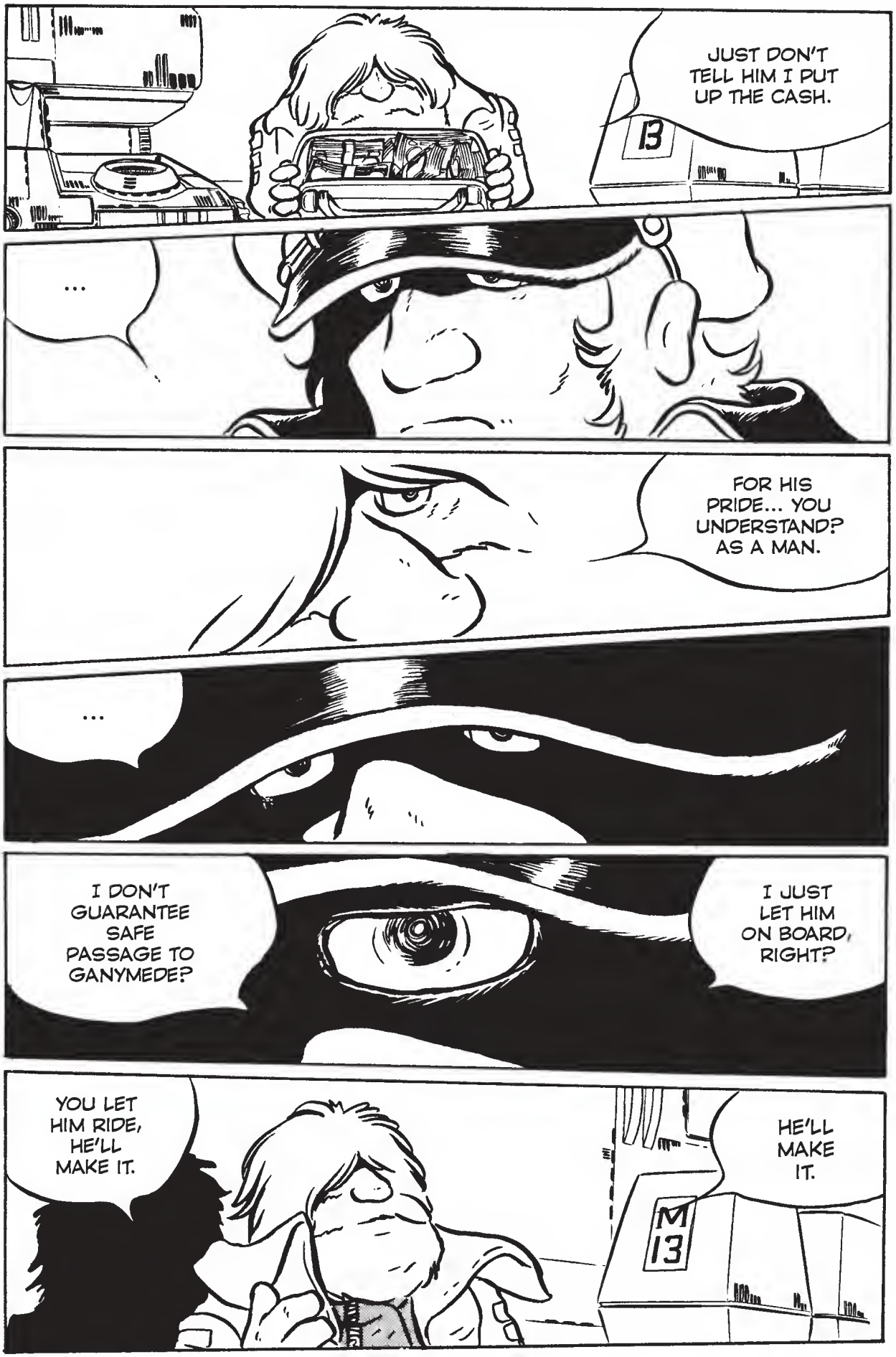

IF YOU ARE TRULY BRAVE, BOY...
EMERALDAS!!
AND SO I WILL NOT SAY GOODBYE...
WE SHALL SURELY MEET AGAIN IN THE VASTNESS OF SPACE.
THE VIRAGO WHO WANDERS SPACE, ABOARD HER SHIP, THE QUEEN EMERALDAS.
THAT'S EMERAL-DAS...?
EMERAL-DAS!

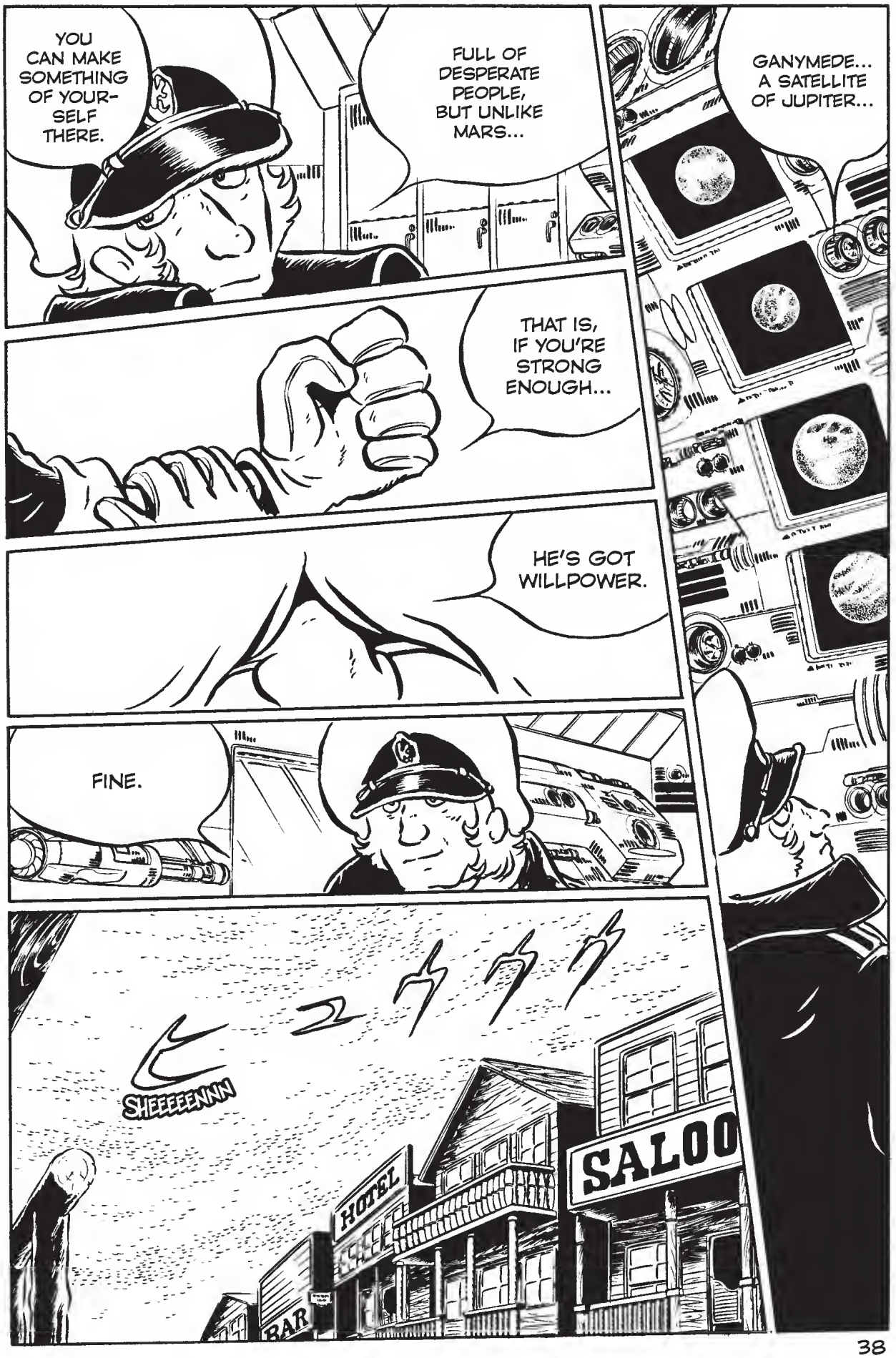
I AM EMERALDAS.
EMERALDAS...
PEOPLE CALL HER THE WITCH OF THE SPACEWAYS...
AN IMMORTAL WHO BATTLES HER WAY THROUGH THE INFINITY OF SPACE...
NO ONE KNOWS FOR WHAT PURPOSE THIS LONELY WANDERER DRIFTS THROUGH THE SEA OF STARS.
SHE IS A WOMAN OF PROFOUND SORROW. DEATH IS THE ONLY REWARD FOR THOSE WHO ENCOUNTER HER OR HER SHIP, THE QUEEN EMERALDAS.
HIROSHI UMINO MET EMERALDAS ABOVE THE RED SANDS ON ARGYRE... AND ON THAT DAY, HIS LONG AND MELANCHOLY TALE BEGAN.


WHAM
LET YOU RIDE FOR FREE?
DON'T MAKE ME LAUGH!!
NO.1
YOU WANT ON BOARD? THAT TAKES MONEY, BOY! MONEY!!
KIDS THESE DAYS THINK IT'S *SO EASY.*



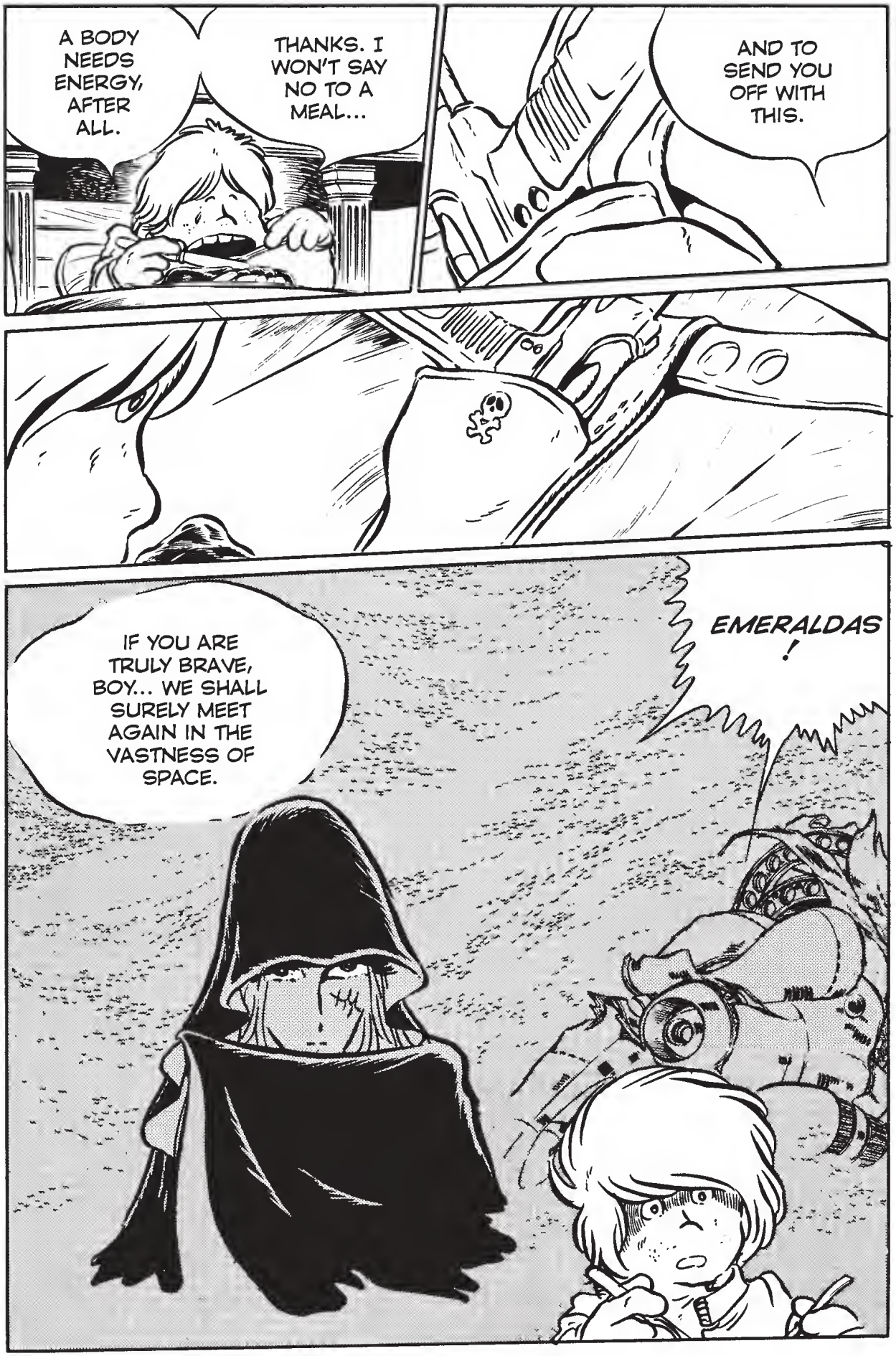

WHAT'D THAT BOY WANT?
WHO'S THERE?
FOR FREE!!
THAT PUNK? HEH. LITTLE BRAT THOUGHT HE COULD HITCH A RIDE ON MY MINERAL FREIGHTER. ALL THE WAY TO GANYMEDE.
BUT MY SHIP'S AUTOMATIC. THERE'S NOTHING TO DO!
OF COURSE, HE OFFERED TO WORK FOR HIS PASSAGE...
LET THE BOY RIDE.
HERE.
?
NOT TO MENTION I'D HAVE TO FEED HIM. HELL NO.

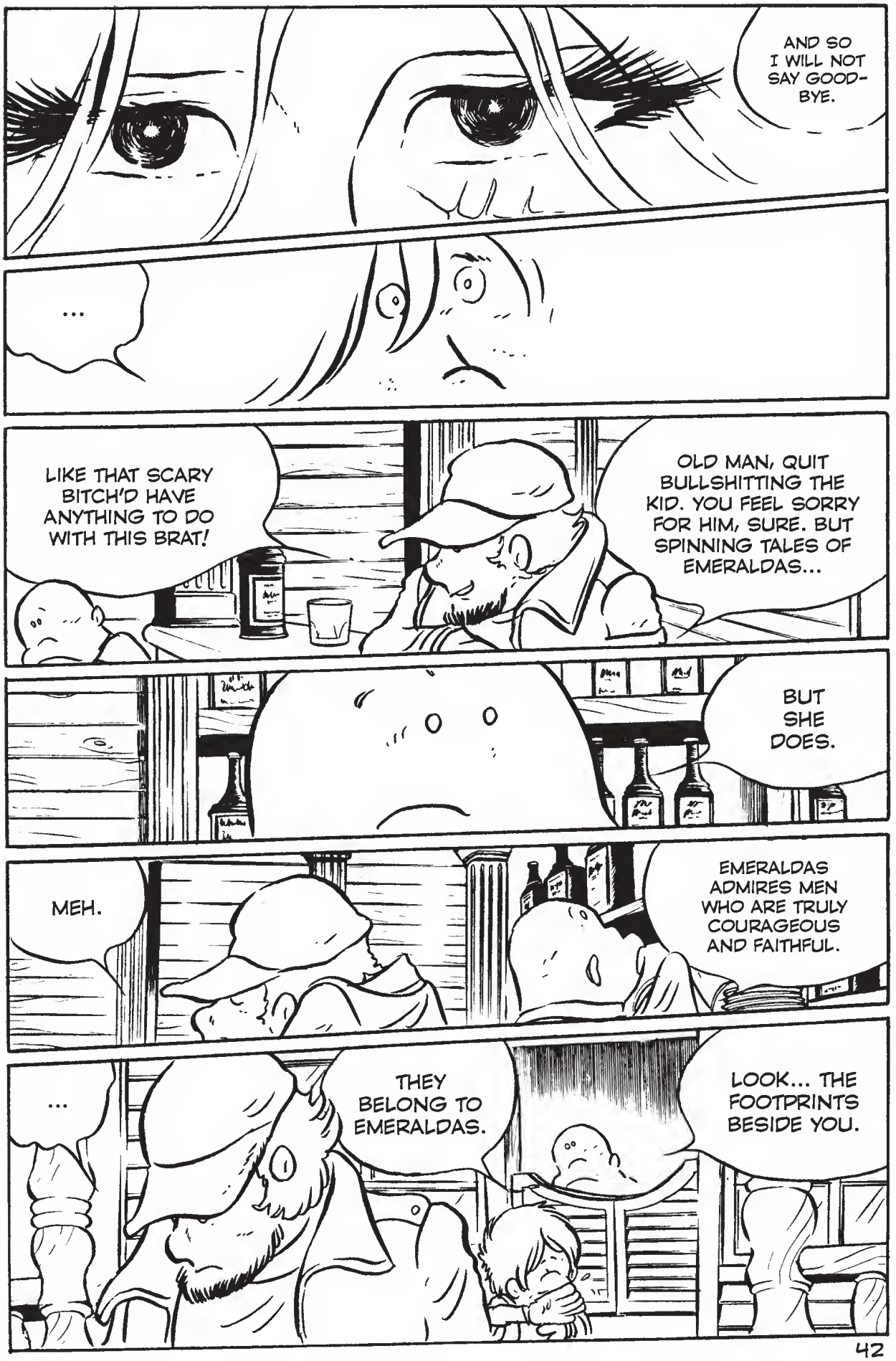

JUST DON'T TELL HIM I PUT UP THE CASH.
13
...
FOR HIS PRIDE... YOU UNDERSTAND? AS A MAN.
...
I DON'T GUARANTEE SAFE PASSAGE TO GANYMEDE?
I JUST LET HIM ON BOARD, RIGHT?
YOU LET HIM RIDE, HE'LL MAKE IT.
HE'LL MAKE IT.
M 13


YOU CAN MAKE SOMETHING OF YOURSELF THERE.
FULL OF DESPERATE PEOPLE, BUT UNLIKE MARS...
GANYMEDE... A SATELLITE OF JUPITER...
THAT IS, IF YOU'RE STRONG ENOUGH...
HE'S GOT WILLPOWER.
FINE.
2777
SHEEEEENNN
HOTEL
SALOO
BAR

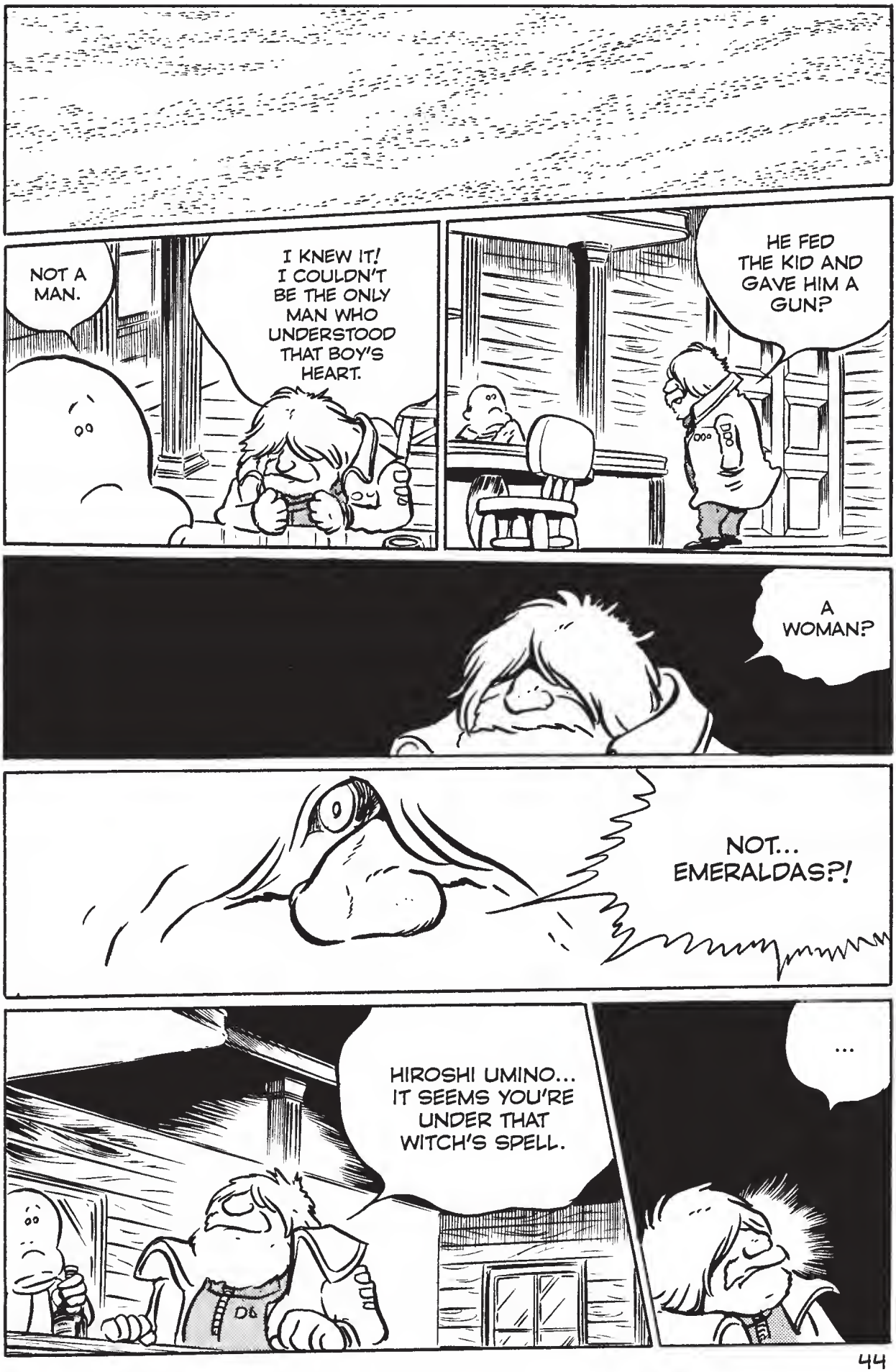
SEEN THAT BRAT HIROSHI UMINO?
WHAT A DUMP.
AND YOU ARE?
YOU GOT YOURSELF A SEAT ON THE CARMINE RED.
CAP'N BORNE SENT ME.
I'M HERE.
ME?... THEY CALL ME GEARS. CHIEF ENGINEER OF THE CARMINE RED.
CHIEF ENGINEER?
CAPTAIN BORNE WAS BRAGGING HOW HIS SHIP WAS FULLY AUTOMATED, BUT HE STILL NEEDS A CHIEF ENGINEER! GUESS IT'S NOT SO SPECIAL!!
WHAM

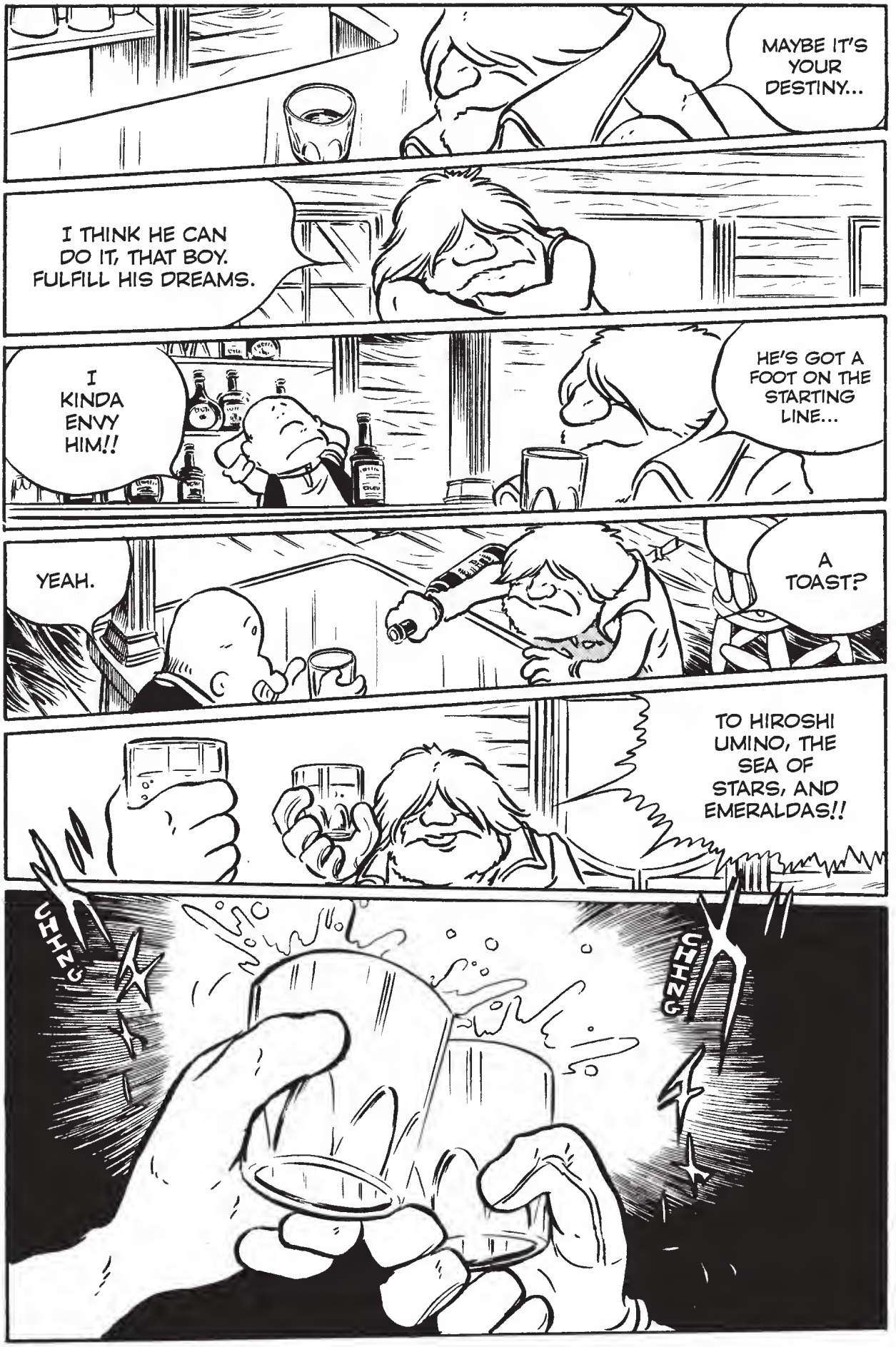
YOU GOT A SEAT, BUT THAT DON'T MEAN YOU'LL MAKE IT TO GANYMEDE ALIVE!! HEAR ME?!
SHUT YER BIG MOUTH!
?
COME ON.
WAIT!
HUH?
EAT THIS.
SHE ASKED ME TO FEED YOU BEFORE YOU SET OUT...
SOME-ONE CAME...
WHY?
WHEN YOU'RE DONE, TAKE THIS, TOO.

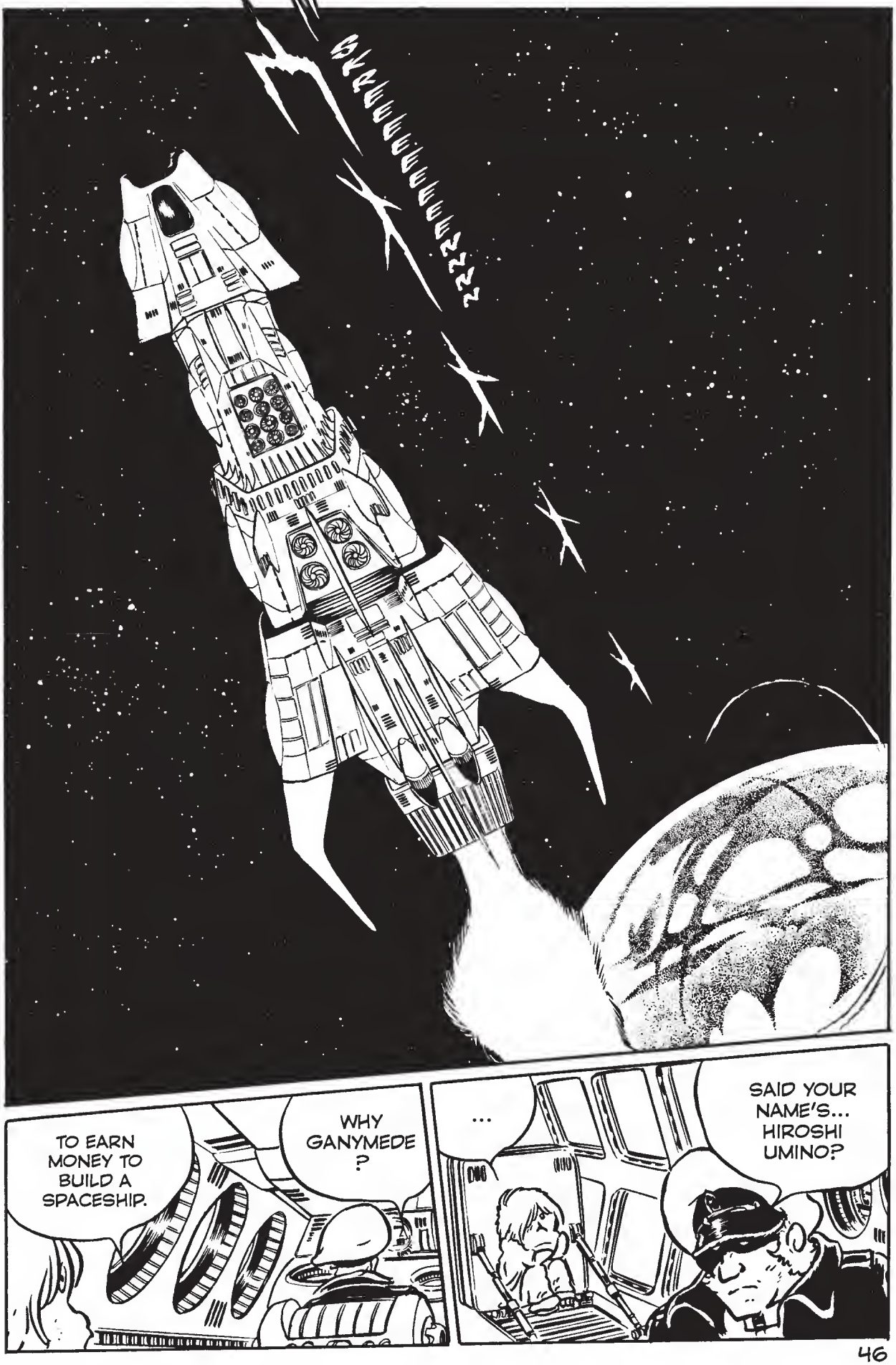

A BODY NEEDS ENERGY, AFTER ALL.
THANKS. I WON'T SAY NO TO A MEAL...
AND TO SEND YOU OFF WITH THIS.
IF YOU ARE TRULY BRAVE, BOY... WE SHALL SURELY MEET AGAIN IN THE VASTNESS OF SPACE.
EMERALDAS!


AND SO I WILL NOT SAY GOOD-BYE.
...
LIKE THAT SCARY BITCH'D HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH THIS BRAT!
OLD MAN, QUIT BULLSHITTING THE KID. YOU FEEL SORRY FOR HIM, SURE. BUT SPINNING TALES OF EMERALDAS...
BUT SHE DOES.
MEH.
EMERALDAS ADMIRES MEN WHO ARE TRULY COURAGEOUS AND FAITHFUL.
...
THEY BELONG TO EMERALDAS.
LOOK... THE FOOTPRINTS BESIDE YOU.

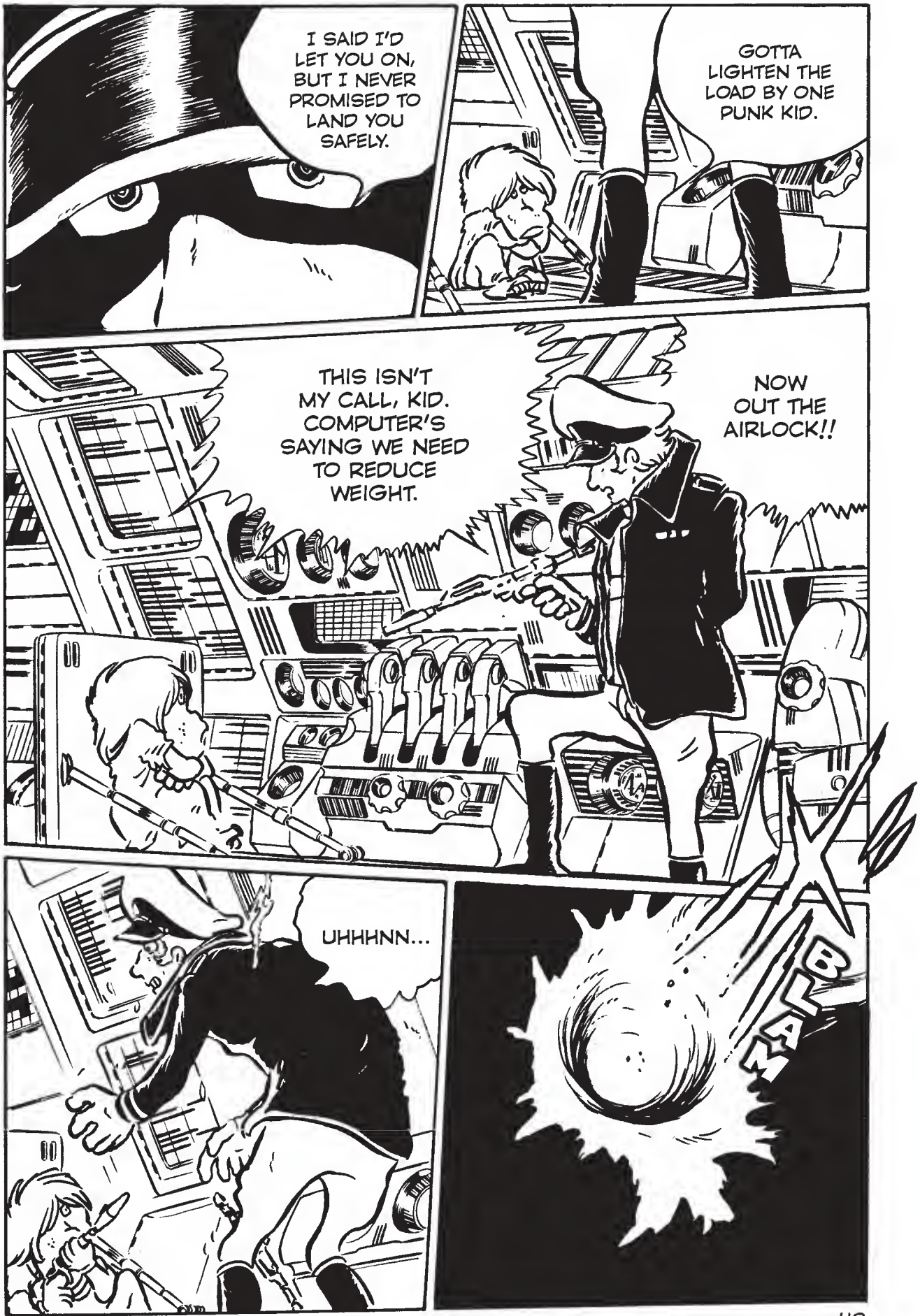
SHEEEWWWWW
THE IMPONDERABLE SORCERESS OF SPACE...

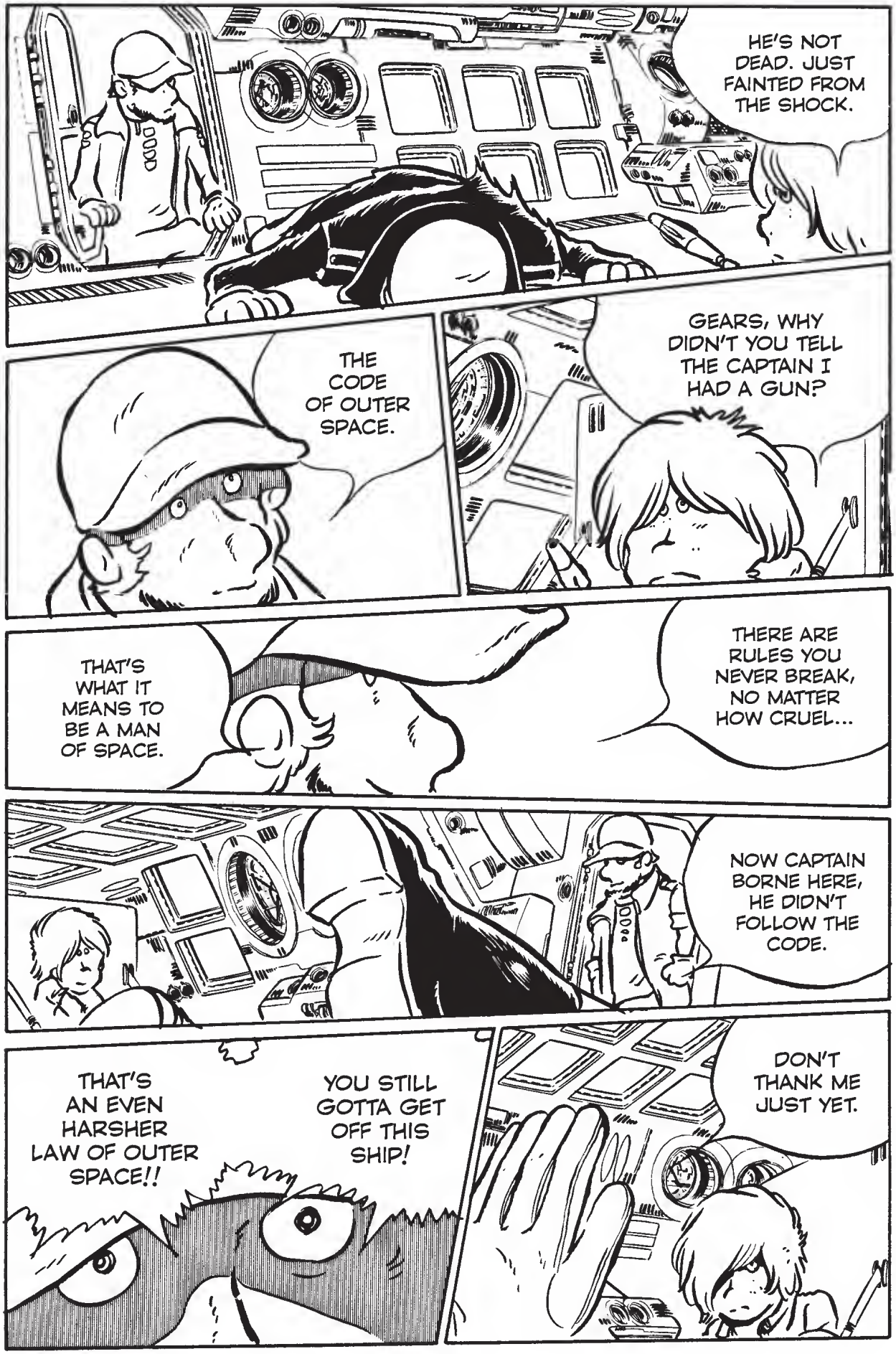

NOT A MAN.
I KNEW IT! I COULDN'T BE THE ONLY MAN WHO UNDERSTOOD THAT BOY'S HEART.
HE FED THE KID AND GAVE HIM A GUN?
A WOMAN?
NOT... EMERALDAS?!
HIROSHI UMINO... IT SEEMS YOU'RE UNDER THAT WITCH'S SPELL.
...

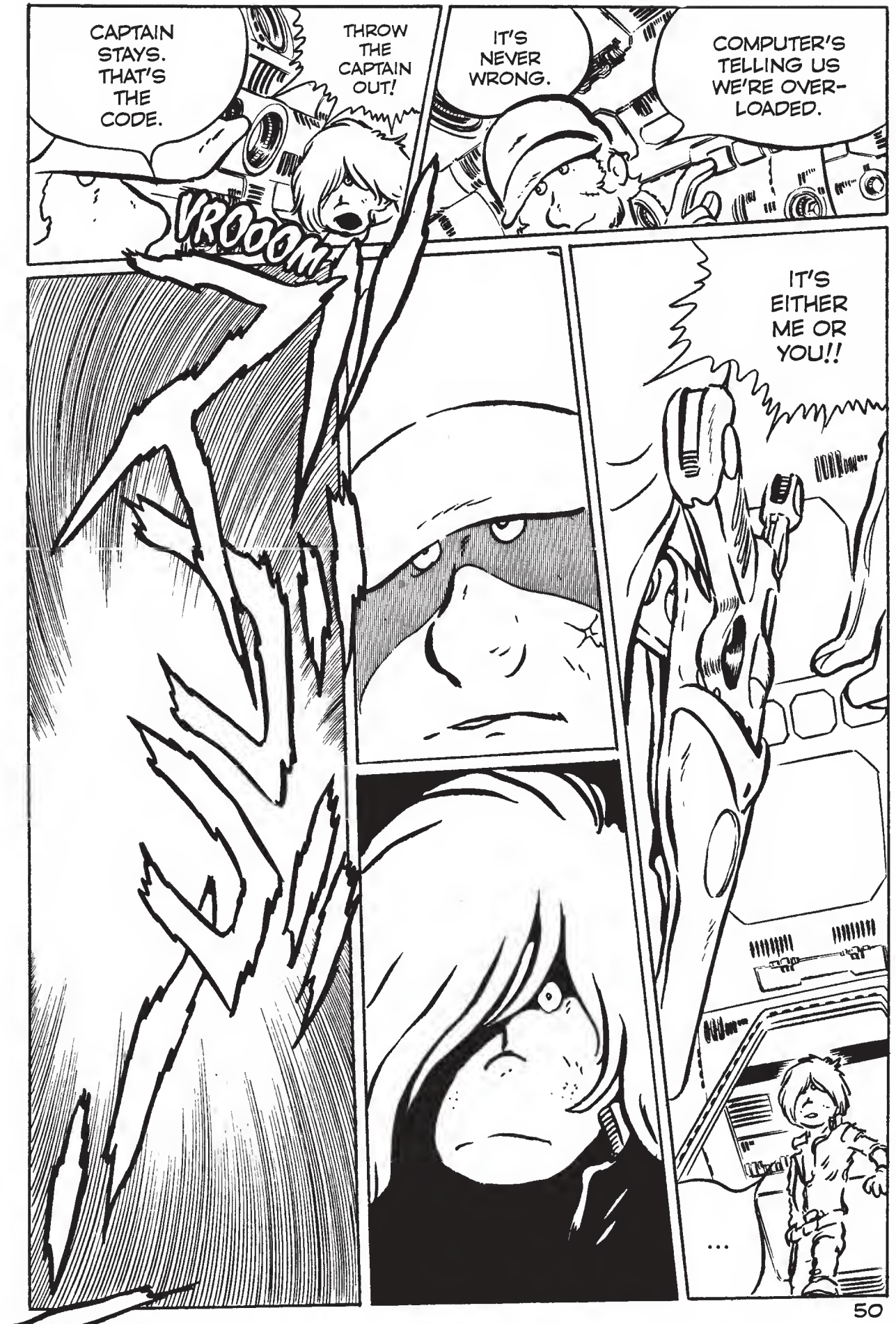

MAYBE IT'S YOUR DESTINY...
I THINK HE CAN DO IT, THAT BOY. FULFILL HIS DREAMS.
I KINDA ENVY HIM!!
HE'S GOT A FOOT ON THE STARTING LINE...
YEAH.
A TOAST?
TO HIROSHI UMINO, THE SEA OF STARS, AND EMERALDAS!!
UHHG
CHNG

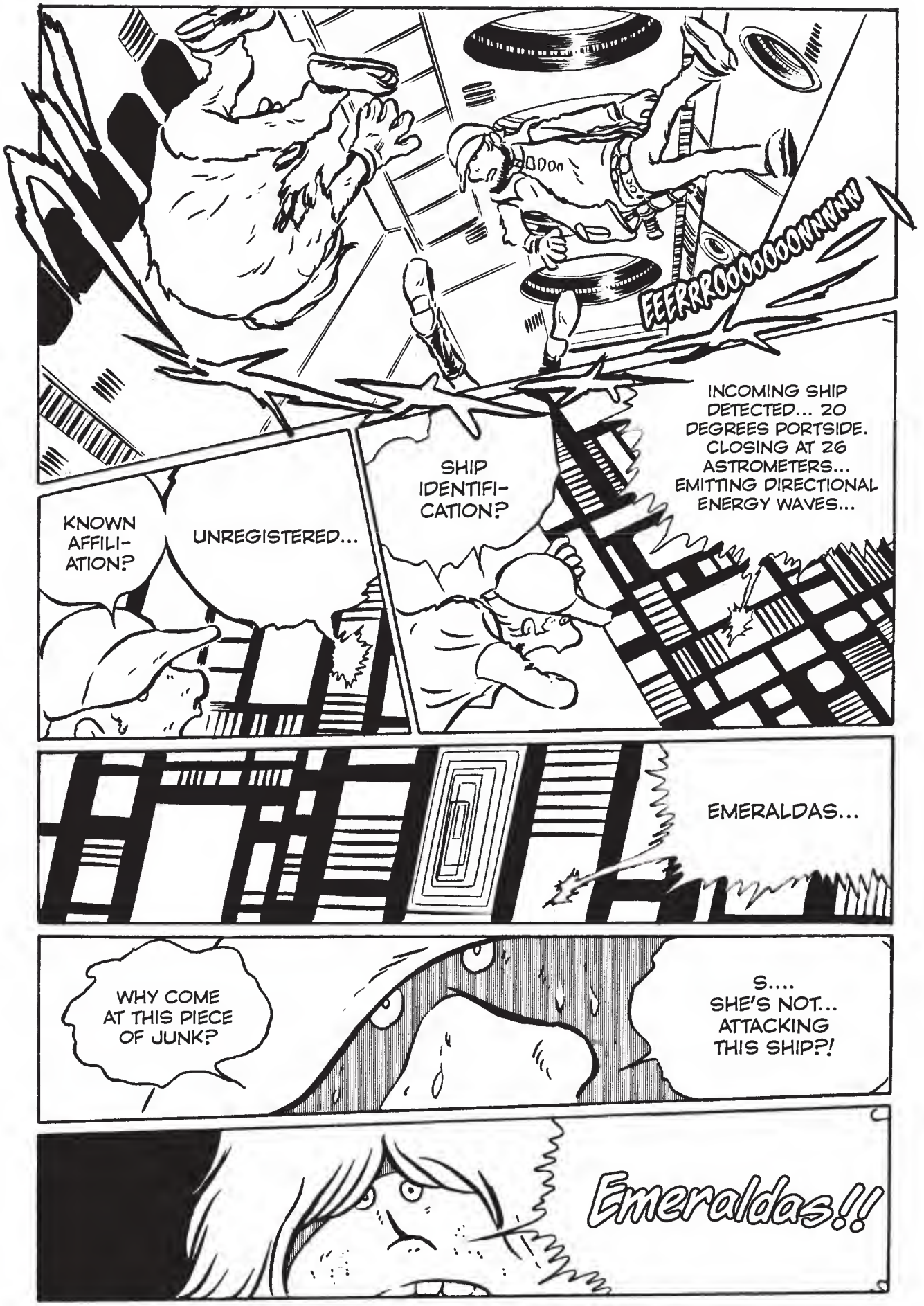

SKREEEEEEEEEEEEZZZZ
TO EARN MONEY TO BUILD A SPACESHIP.
WHY GANYMEDE ?
...
SAID YOUR NAME'S... HIROSHI UMINO?

YOU HEARD ME.
WHAT? TO BUILD A SPACESHIP?
DAYDREAMING'S FINE, KID. BUT YOU GOTTA FACE REALITY. PLAY-TIME'S OVER, Y'KNOW?
BUILD A SPACE-SHIP...
AH HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA! THIS'S WHY I CAN'T STAND KIDS!
WAS THAT A DAYDREAM, CAPTAIN BORNE?
I TRAVELED FROM EARTH TO MARS ON MY OWN SHIP...
UGH...
THE CARMINE RED'S OVERLOADED. TOOK ON TOO MANY MINERALS, AND WE'RE TOO HEAVY TO BREAK FOR GANYMEDE. MIGHT EVEN CRASH.
WHATEVER. IN ANY CASE, IT'S OVER.

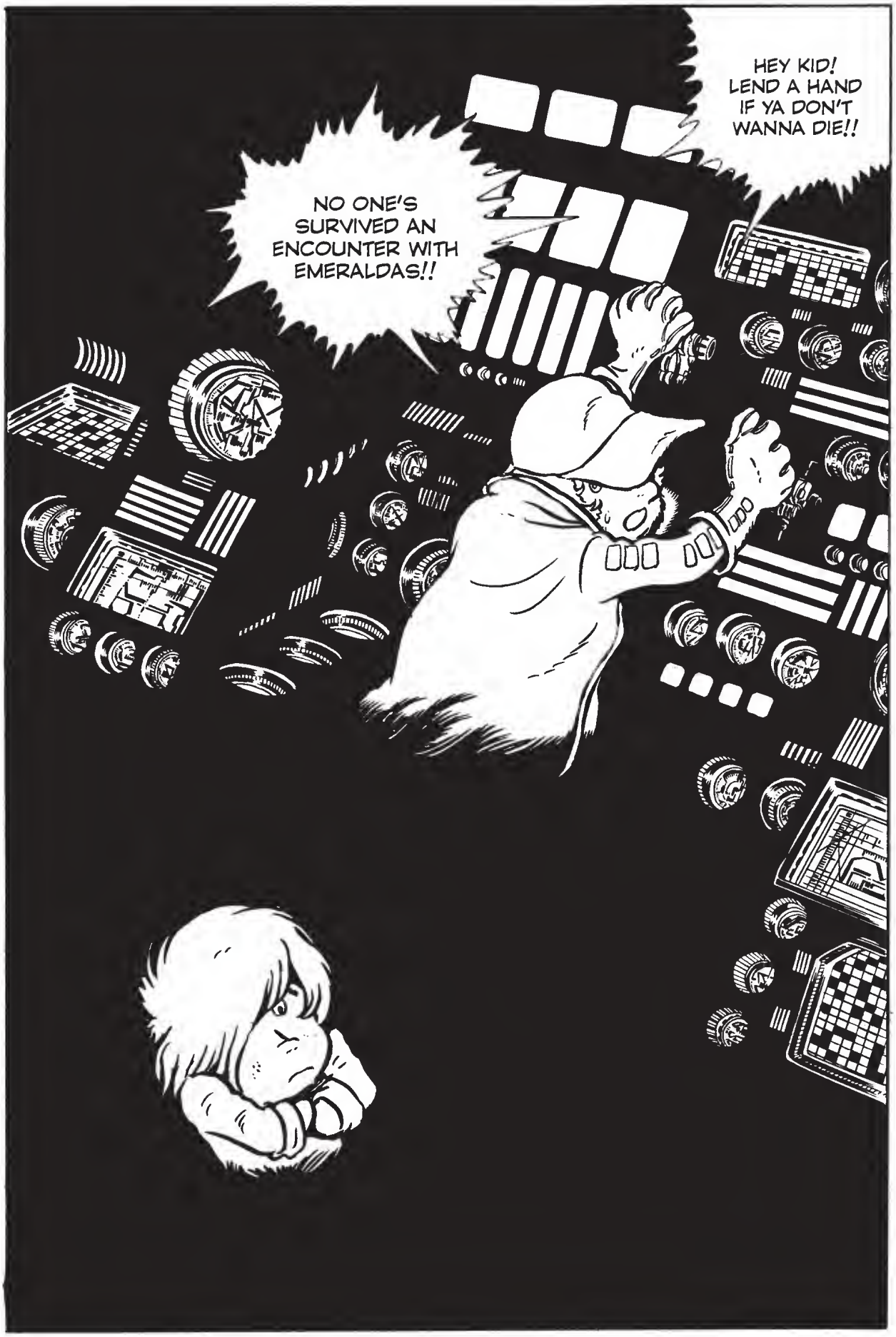

I SAID I'D LET YOU ON, BUT I NEVER PROMISED TO LAND YOU SAFELY.
GOTTA LIGHTEN THE LOAD BY ONE PUNK KID.
THIS ISN'T MY CALL, KID. COMPUTER'S SAYING WE NEED TO REDUCE WEIGHT.
NOW OUT THE AIRLOCK!!
UHHHNN...
BLAM

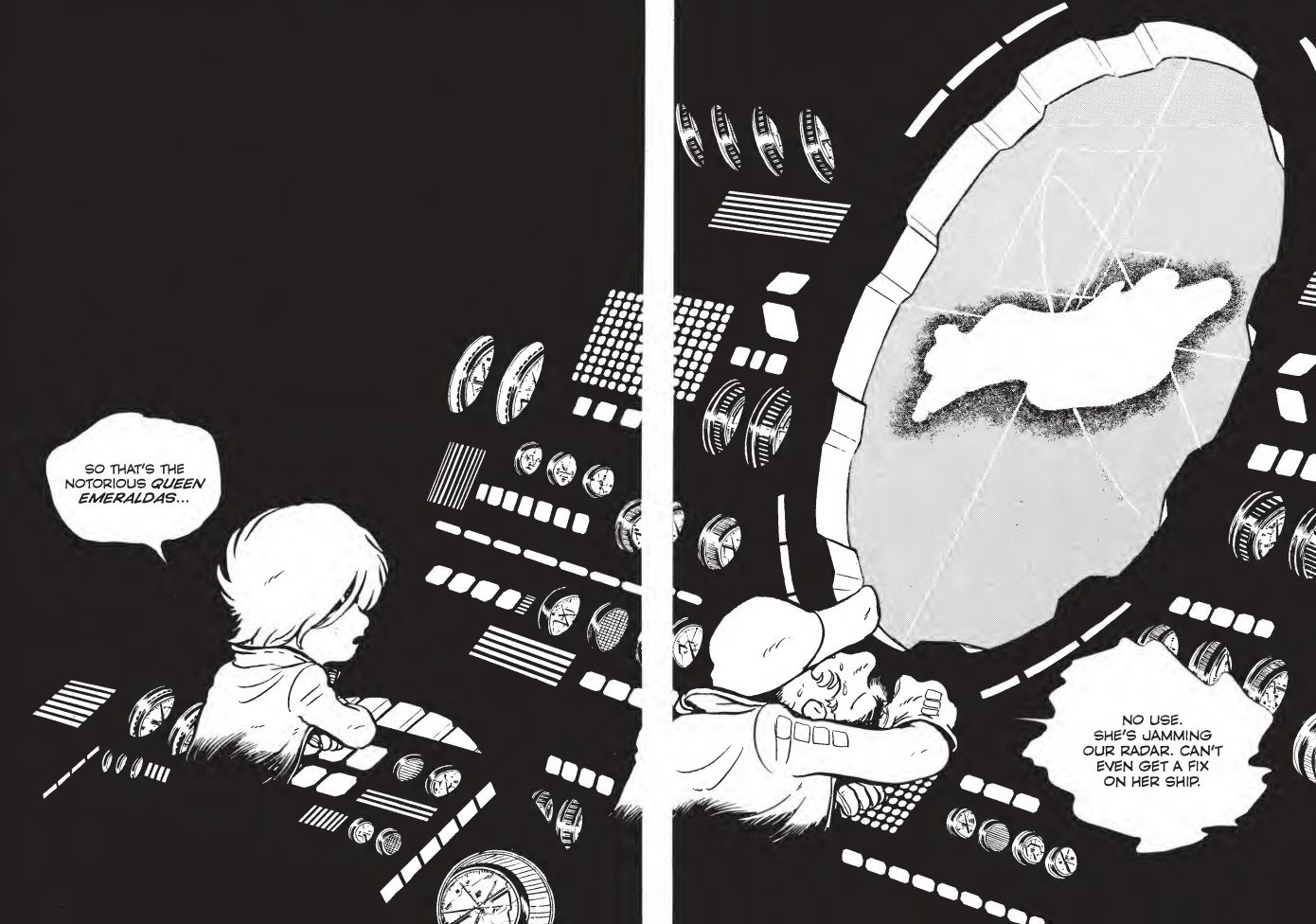

HE'S NOT DEAD. JUST FAINTED FROM THE SHOCK.
GEARS, WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL THE CAPTAIN I HAD A GUN?
THE CODE OF OUTER SPACE.
THERE ARE RULES YOU NEVER BREAK, NO MATTER HOW CRUEL...
THAT'S WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A MAN OF SPACE.
NOW CAPTAIN BORNE HERE, HE DIDN'T FOLLOW THE CODE.
DON'T THANK ME JUST YET.
YOU STILL GOTTA GET OFF THIS SHIP!
THAT'S AN EVEN HARSHER LAW OF OUTER SPACE!!


CAPTAIN STAYS. THAT'S THE CODE.
THROW THE CAPTAIN OUT!
VROOOM
IT'S NEVER WRONG.
COMPUTER'S TELLING US WE'RE OVER-LOADED.
IT'S EITHER ME OR YOU!!
...

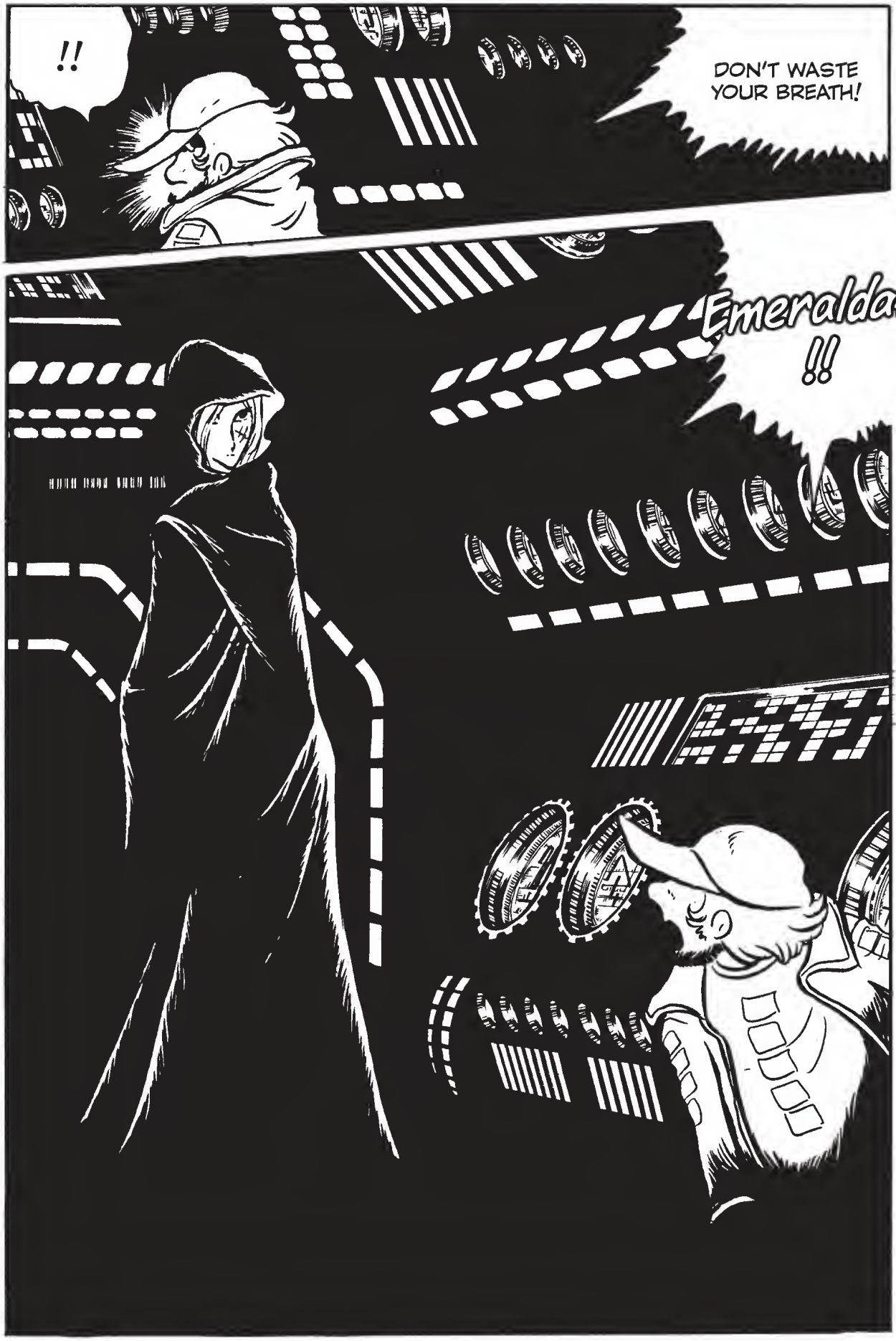

EEERRROOOOOOONNNN!
INCOMING SHIP DETECTED... 20 DEGREES PORTSIDE. CLOSING AT 26 ASTROMETERS... EMITTING DIRECTIONAL ENERGY WAVES...
SHIP IDENTIFI-CATION?
UNREGISTERED...
KNOWN AFFILI-ATION?
EMERALDAS...
S.... SHE'S NOT... ATTACKING THIS SHIP?!
WHY COME AT THIS PIECE OF JUNK?
Emeraldas!!

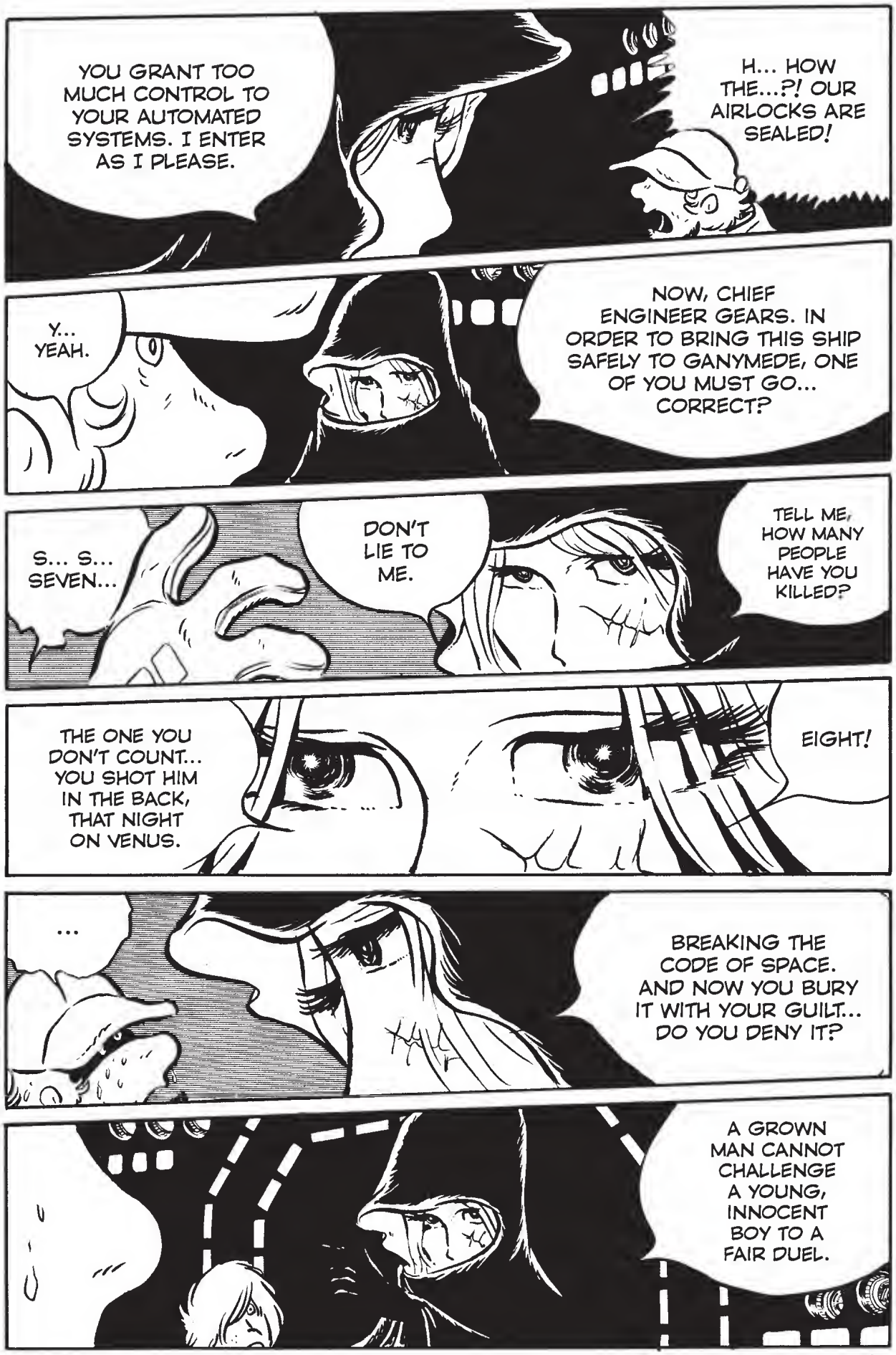
I AM EMERALDAS. I CAN NO LONGER REMEMBER HOW LONG I HAVE WANDERED THE DARK SEAS OF SPACE...
FADING LIKE THE DREAMS OF YOUTH... MEMORIES OF A GREEN LAND WITH GREAT BLUE SKIES... A DIFFERENT WORLD. ALL THAT REMAINS... IS EMERALDAS...


NO ONE'S SURVIVED AN ENCOUNTER WITH EMERALDAS!!
HEY KID! LEND A HAND IF YA DON'T WANNA DIE!!

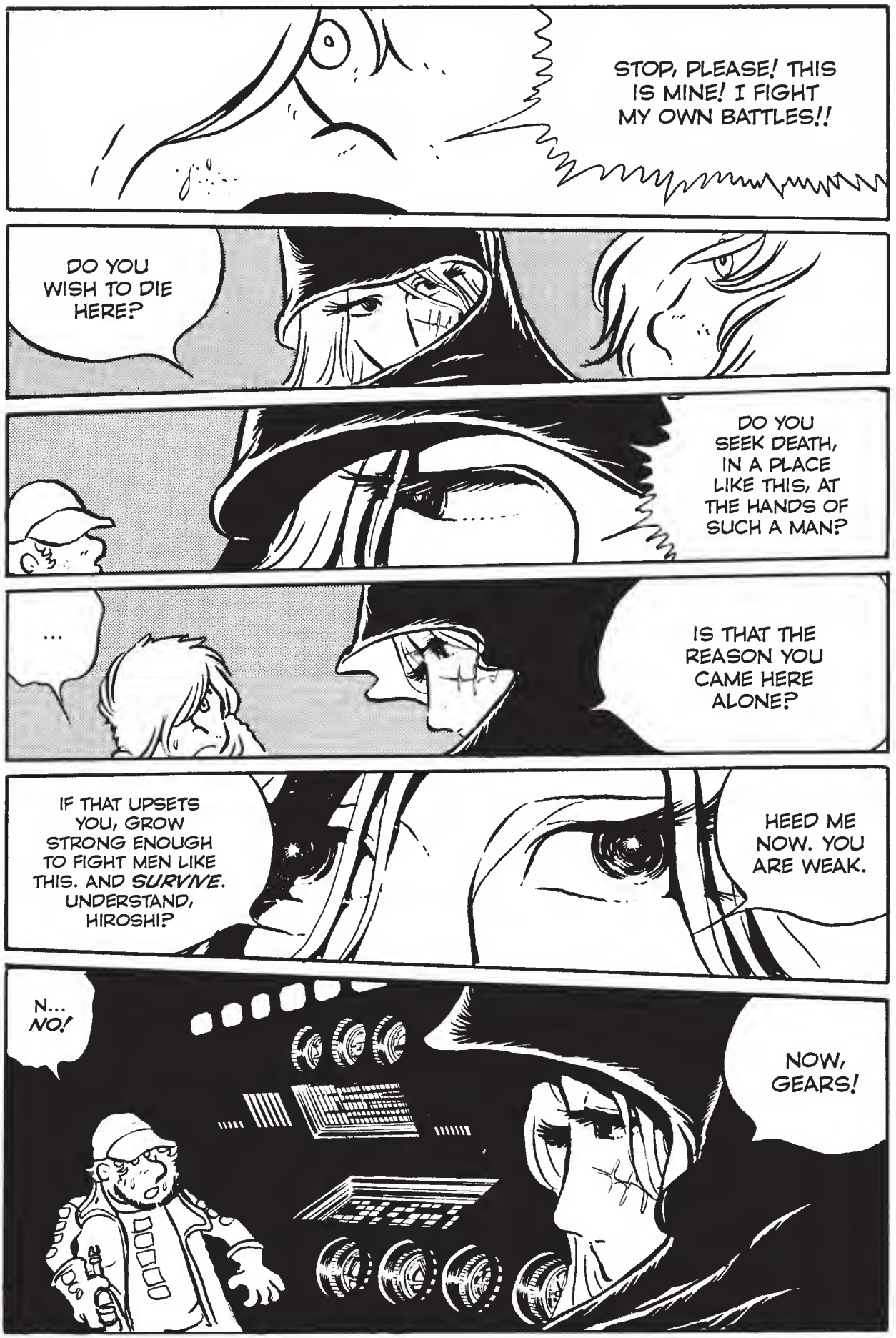

SO THAT'S THE NOTORIOUS *QUEEN EMERALDAS*...
NO USE. SHE'S JAMMING OUR RADAR. CAN'T EVEN GET A FIX ON HER SHIP.

WANDERING THE SEA OF STARS ON AN ENDLESS VOYAGE... FOREVER...
IF YOU ARE TRULY BRAVE, BOY...
WE SHALL SURELY MEET AGAIN IN THE VASTNESS OF SPACE.
AND SO I WILL NOT SAY GOODBYE...
OPEN THE MANUAL ENGINE CIRCUIT!! DIVERT ALL POWER TO THRUSTERS!!!
GOTTA DO SOMETHING OR WE'RE DEAD MEAT!!


!!
DON'T WASTE YOUR BREATH!
Emeraldas !!

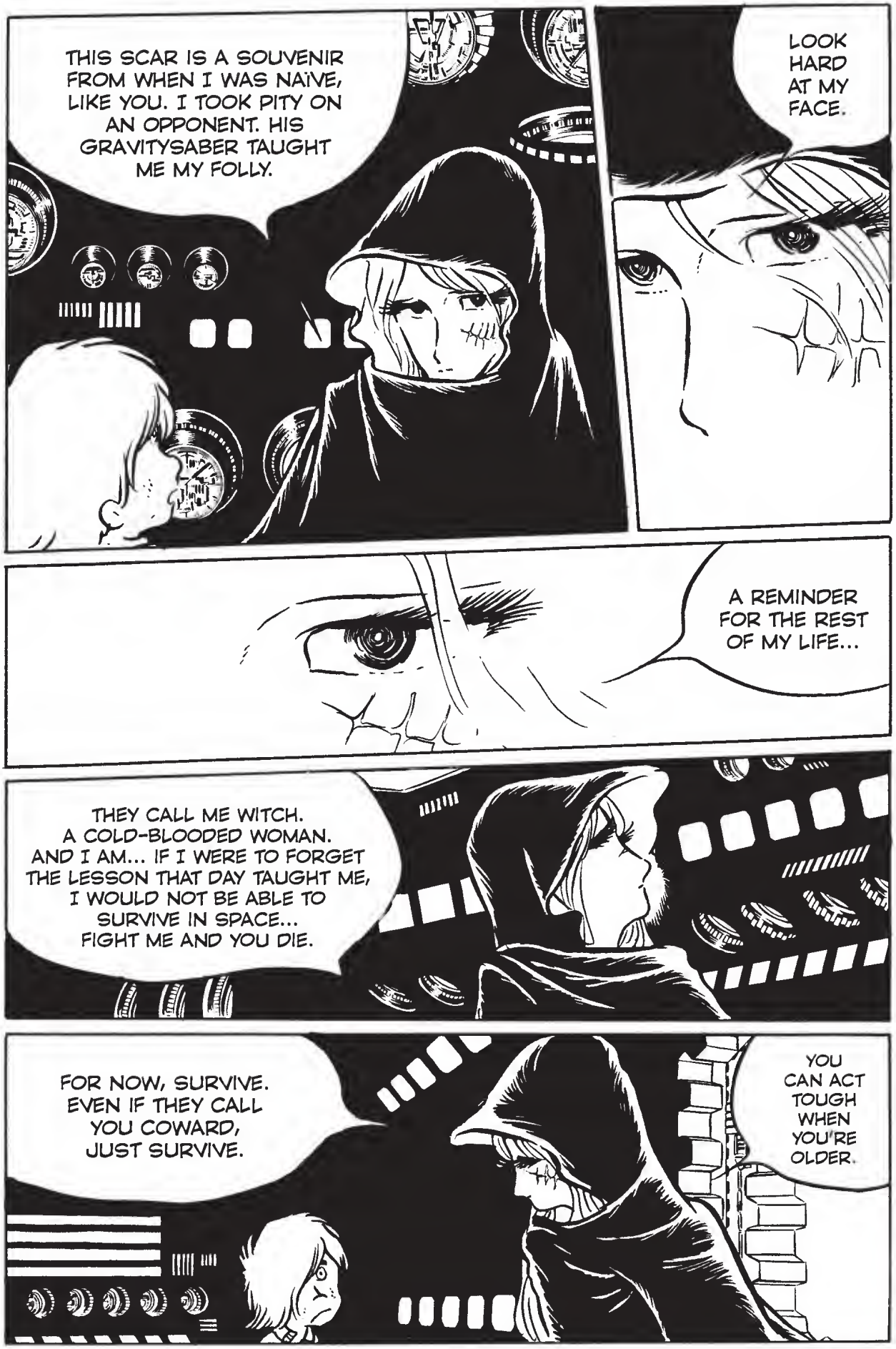

YOU GRANT TOO MUCH CONTROL TO YOUR AUTOMATED SYSTEMS. I ENTER AS I PLEASE.
H... HOW THE...?! OUR AIRLOCKS ARE SEALED!
Y... YEAH.
NOW, CHIEF ENGINEER GEARS. IN ORDER TO BRING THIS SHIP SAFELY TO GANYMEDE, ONE OF YOU MUST GO... CORRECT?
S... S... SEVEN...
DON'T LIE TO ME.
TELL ME, HOW MANY PEOPLE HAVE YOU KILLED?
THE ONE YOU DON'T COUNT... YOU SHOT HIM IN THE BACK, THAT NIGHT ON VENUS.
EIGHT!
...
BREAKING THE CODE OF SPACE. AND NOW YOU BURY IT WITH YOUR GUILT... DO YOU DENY IT?
A GROWN MAN CANNOT CHALLENGE A YOUNG, INNOCENT BOY TO A FAIR DUEL.

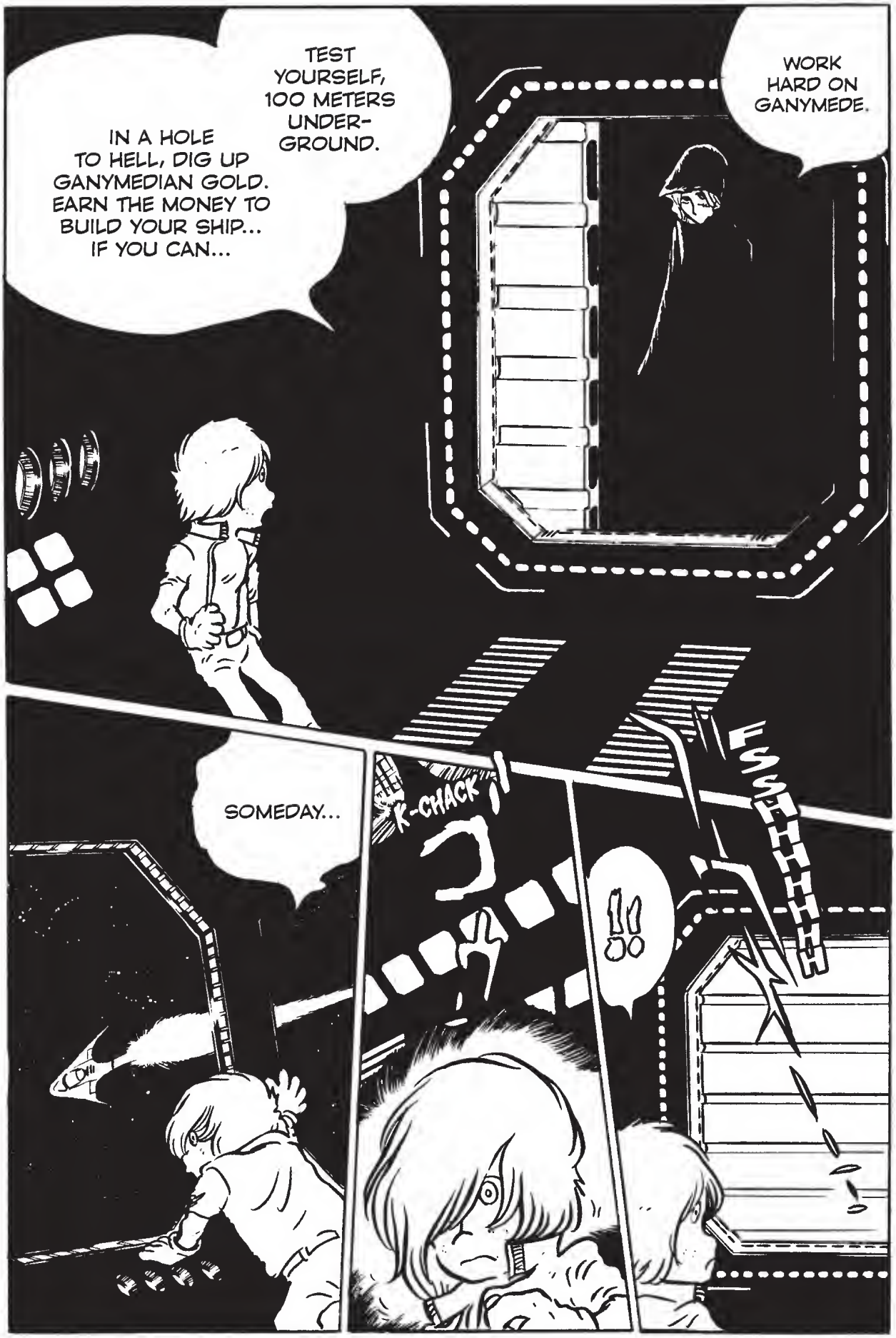
I STAND IN HIS PLACE!
DRAW YOUR WEAPON, GEARS!!


STOP, PLEASE! THIS IS MINE! I FIGHT MY OWN BATTLES!!
DO YOU WISH TO DIE HERE?
DO YOU SEEK DEATH, IN A PLACE LIKE THIS, AT THE HANDS OF SUCH A MAN?
...
IS THAT THE REASON YOU CAME HERE ALONE?
IF THAT UPSETS YOU, GROW STRONG ENOUGH TO FIGHT MEN LIKE THIS. AND *SURVIVE*. UNDERSTAND, HIROSHI?
HEED ME NOW. YOU ARE WEAK.
N... *NO!*
NOW, GEARS!

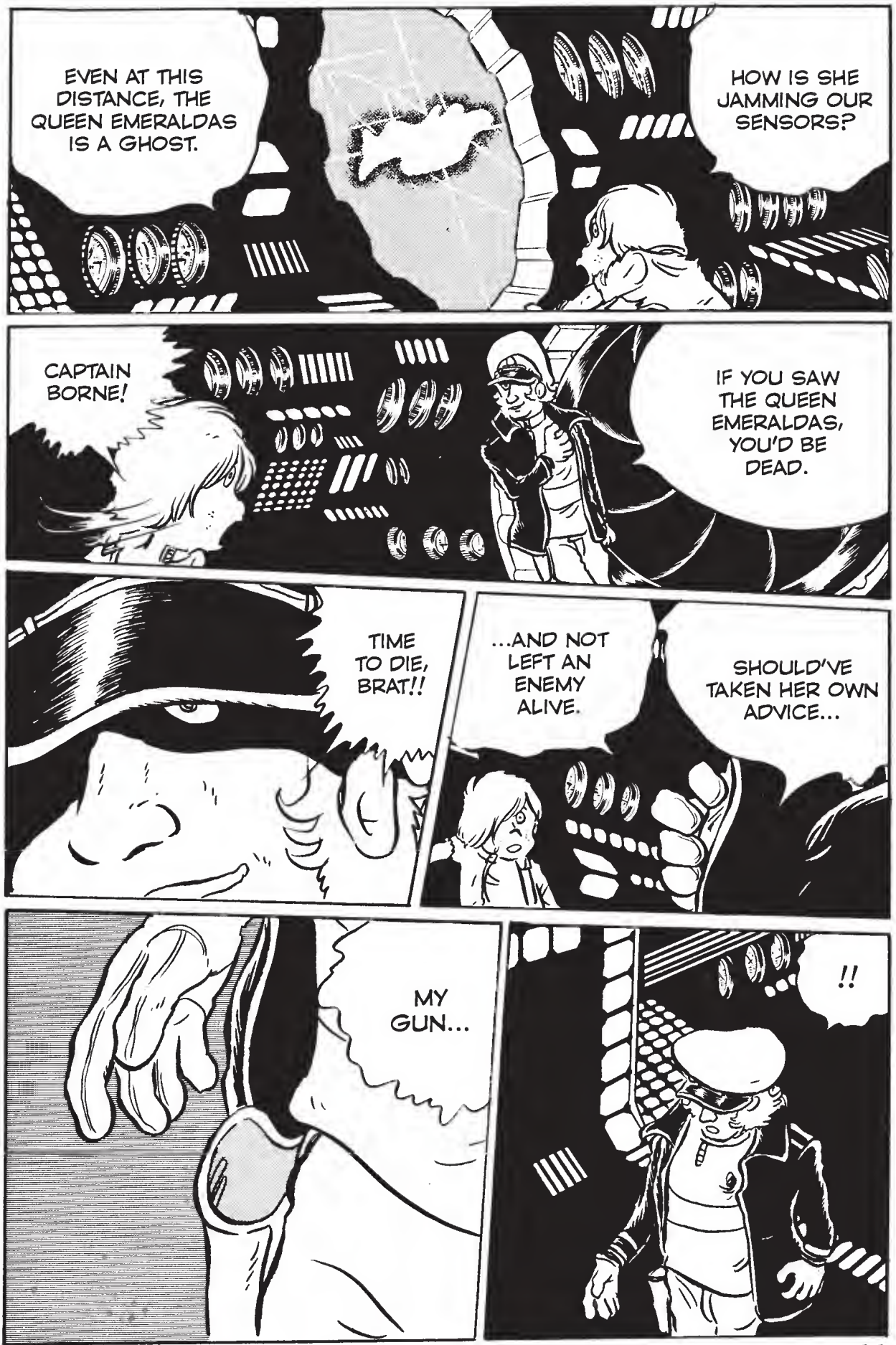
BOOM
SNARK
Arg!

OPEN THE AIRLOCK!!
SIZZZZZLLLE
SHEEEW
SHEEEW
DEFEATED OPPONENTS SEEK REVENGE. YOU'LL FIND IT'S TOO LATE FOR REGRETS WITH A HOLE IN YOUR HEAD.
WHEN YOU FIGHT—KILL. NOTHING ELSE.
CLICK

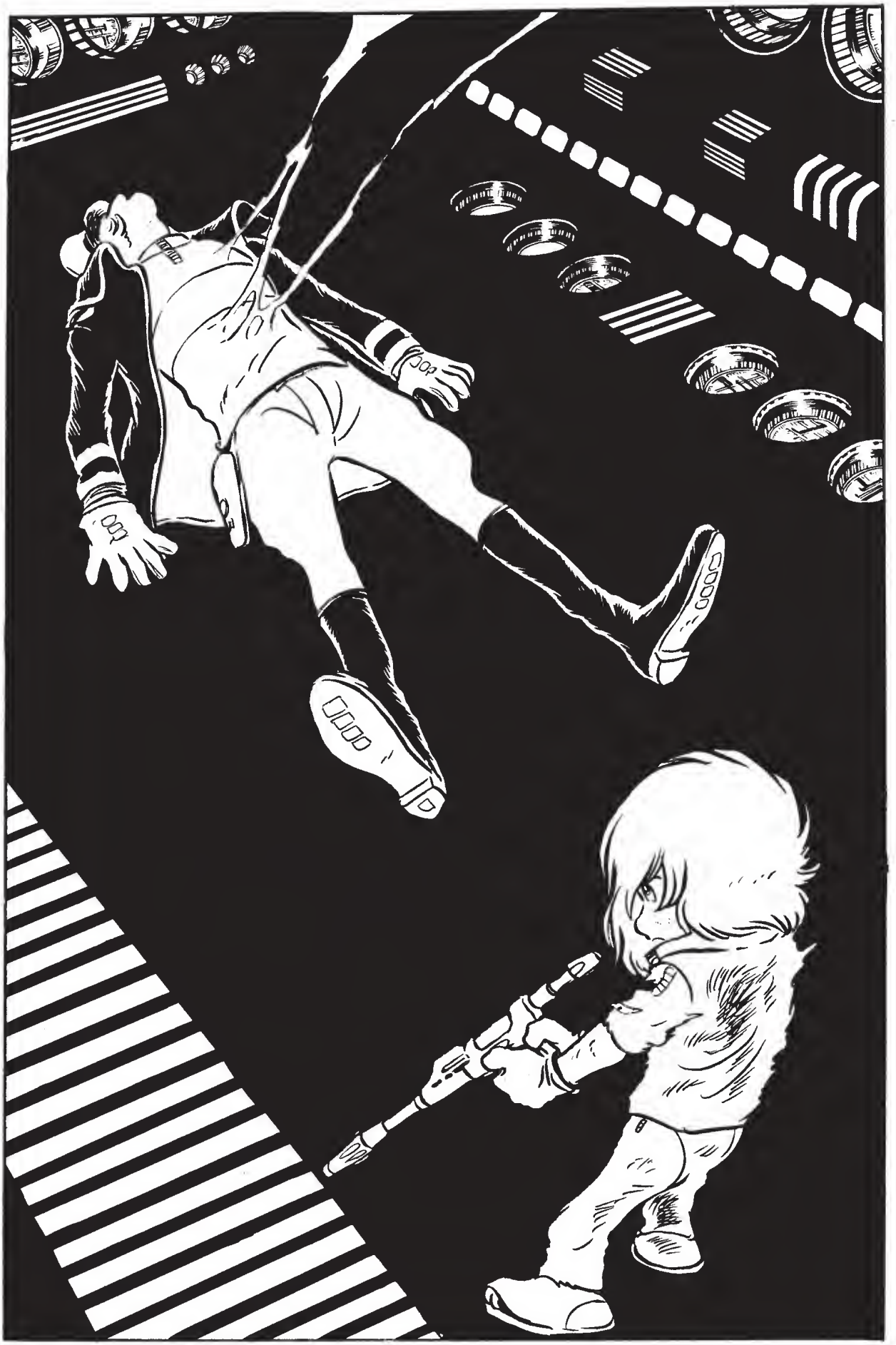

THIS SCAR IS A SOUVENIR FROM WHEN I WAS NAÏVE, LIKE YOU. I TOOK PITY ON AN OPPONENT. HIS GRAVITYSABER TAUGHT ME MY FOLLY.
LOOK HARD AT MY FACE.
A REMINDER FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE...
THEY CALL ME WITCH. A COLD-BLOODED WOMAN. AND I AM... IF I WERE TO FORGET THE LESSON THAT DAY TAUGHT ME, I WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO SURVIVE IN SPACE... FIGHT ME AND YOU DIE.
FOR NOW, SURVIVE. EVEN IF THEY CALL YOU COWARD, JUST SURVIVE.
YOU CAN ACT TOUGH WHEN YOU'RE OLDER.

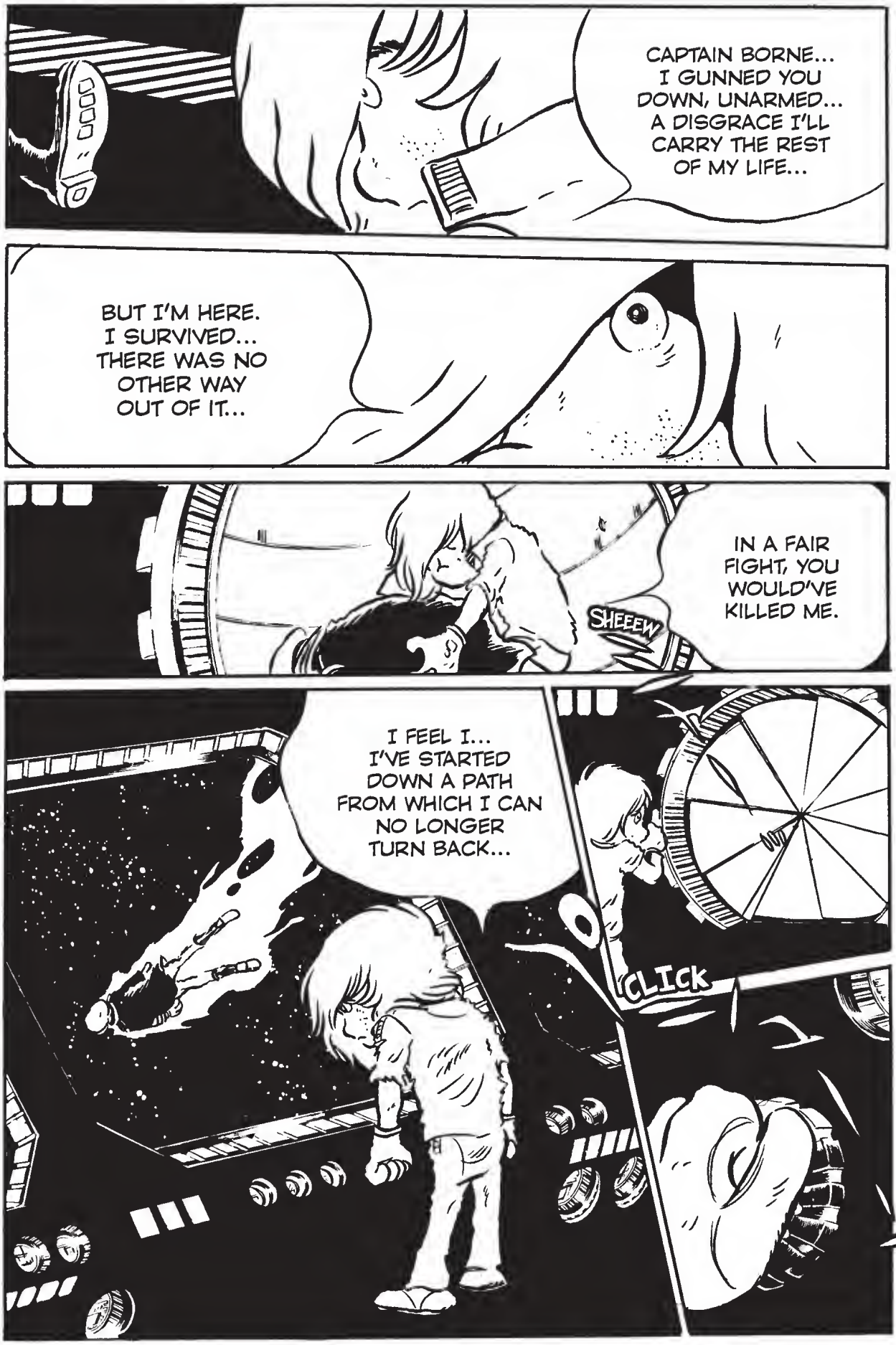

WORK HARD ON GANYMEDE.
TEST YOURSELF, 100 METERS UNDER-GROUND.
IN A HOLE TO HELL, DIG UP GANYMEDIAN GOLD. EARN THE MONEY TO BUILD YOUR SHIP... IF YOU CAN...
SOMEDAY...
K-CHACK
FSSHHHHHH
!!

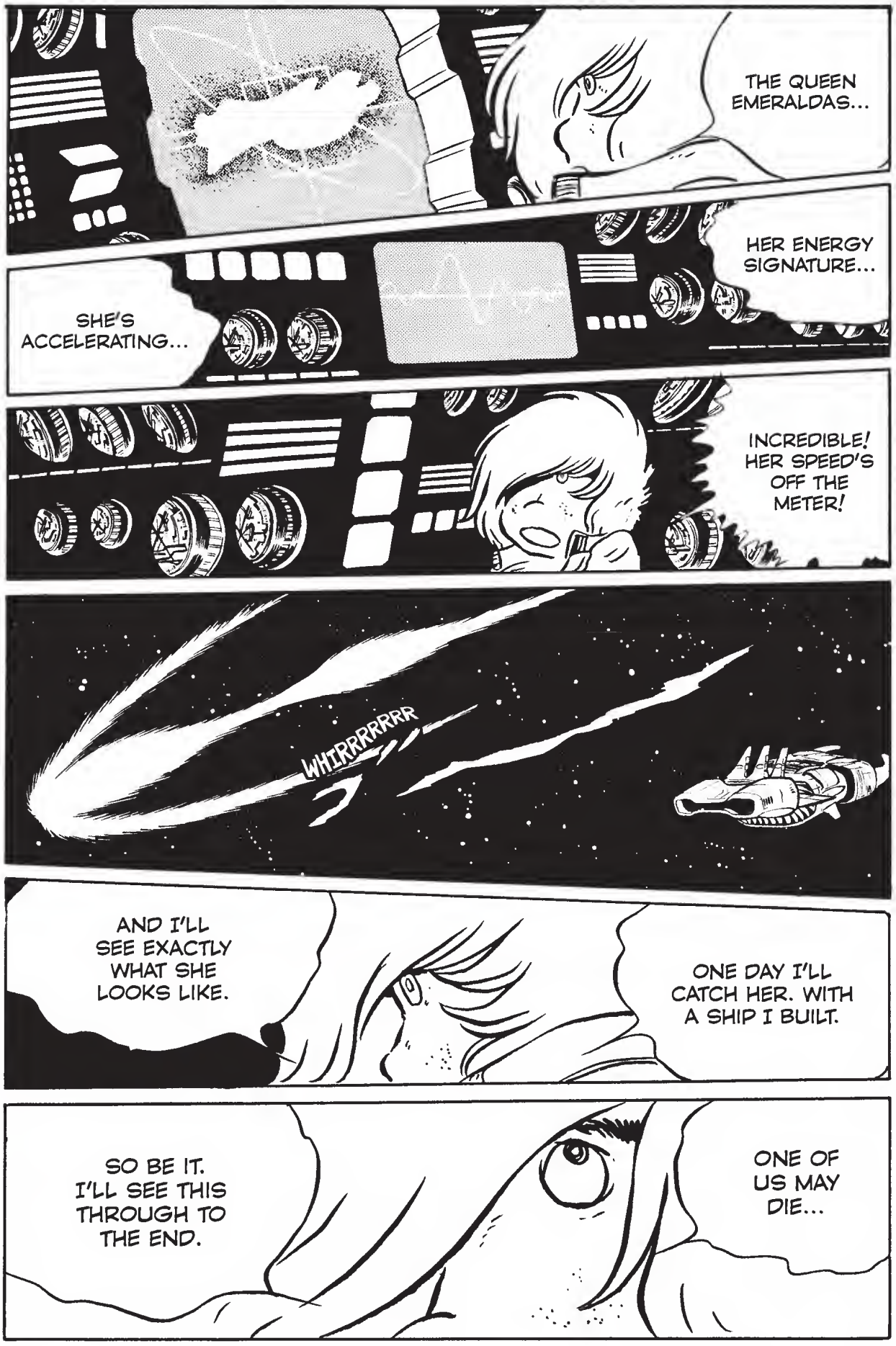
ZZZZZZMMMMMMMMMM
BANG


EVEN AT THIS DISTANCE, THE QUEEN EMERALDAS IS A GHOST.
HOW IS SHE JAMMING OUR SENSORS?
CAPTAIN BORNE!
IF YOU SAW THE QUEEN EMERALDAS, YOU'D BE DEAD.
TIME TO DIE, BRAT!!
...AND NOT LEFT AN ENEMY ALIVE.
SHOULD'VE TAKEN HER OWN ADVICE...
MY GUN...
!!

PLEASE.
JUST WAIT!!
THAT VIOLATES THE CODE OF SPACE!
HEY! W... WAIT! MY GUN FELL OUTTA ITS HOLSTER. I'M UNARMED!!
Argh!!
BZZZZAT

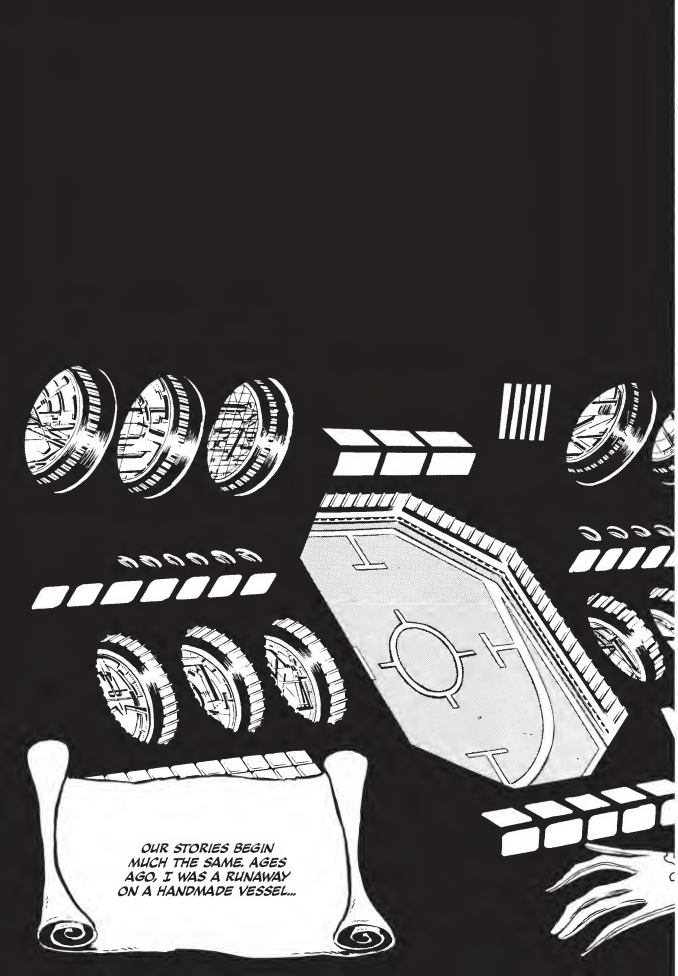



CAPTAIN BORNE... I GUNNED YOU DOWN, UNARMED... A DISGRACE I'LL CARRY THE REST OF MY LIFE...
BUT I'M HERE. I SURVIVED... THERE WAS NO OTHER WAY OUT OF IT...
SHEEEW
IN A FAIR FIGHT, YOU WOULD'VE KILLED ME.
I FEEL I... I'VE STARTED DOWN A PATH FROM WHICH I CAN NO LONGER TURN BACK...
CLICK

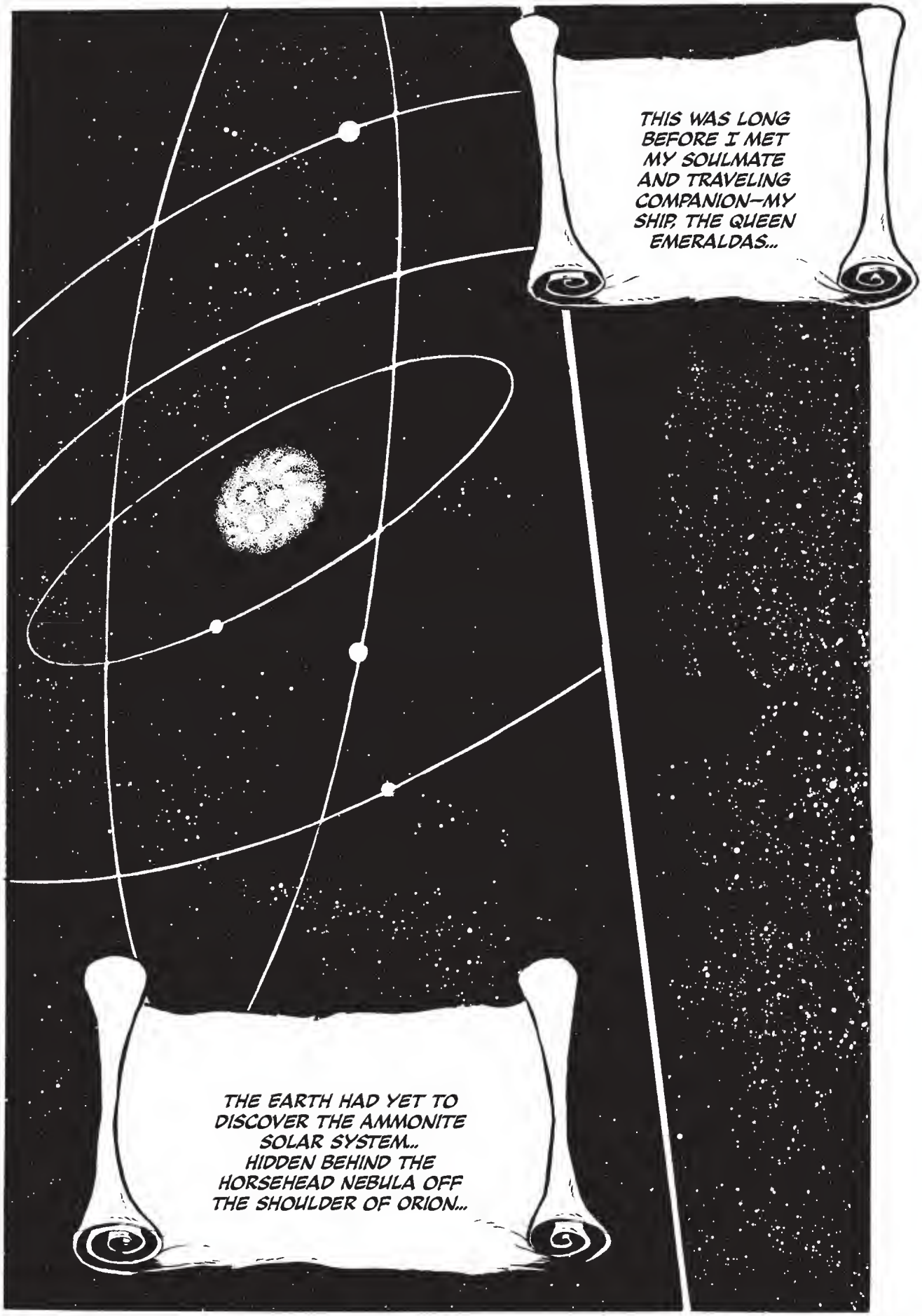

THE QUEEN EMERALDAS...
HER ENERGY SIGNATURE...
SHE'S ACCELERATING...
INCREDIBLE! HER SPEED'S OFF THE METER!
WHIRRRRRRR
AND I'LL SEE EXACTLY WHAT SHE LOOKS LIKE.
ONE DAY I'LL CATCH HER. WITH A SHIP I BUILT.
SO BE IT. I'LL SEE THIS THROUGH TO THE END.
ONE OF US MAY DIE...

GOTCHA, COMPUTER.
ENTERING JUPITER'S GRAVITATIONAL PULL. DO NOT TOUCH THE CONTROLS. ALLOW THE AUTOMATED SYSTEMS TO GUIDE YOU IN.
ENTERING GANYMEDE LANDING TRAJECTORY.
THIS IS THE REAL BEGINNING!!
TAKE ME STRAIGHT TO HELL!
THOSE WHO QUIT THEIR NATIVE LANDS SEEKING DREAMS FACE MANY HARDSHIPS, OBSTACLES TO OVERCOME. AND EACH TRIAL VANQUISHED LEAVES SCARS ON THE BODY AND HEART.
AS I KNOW WELL. I, WHO SHALL WANDER THE SEA OF STARS UNTIL THE FIRE OF MY LIFE FADES. A FREE WOMAN...

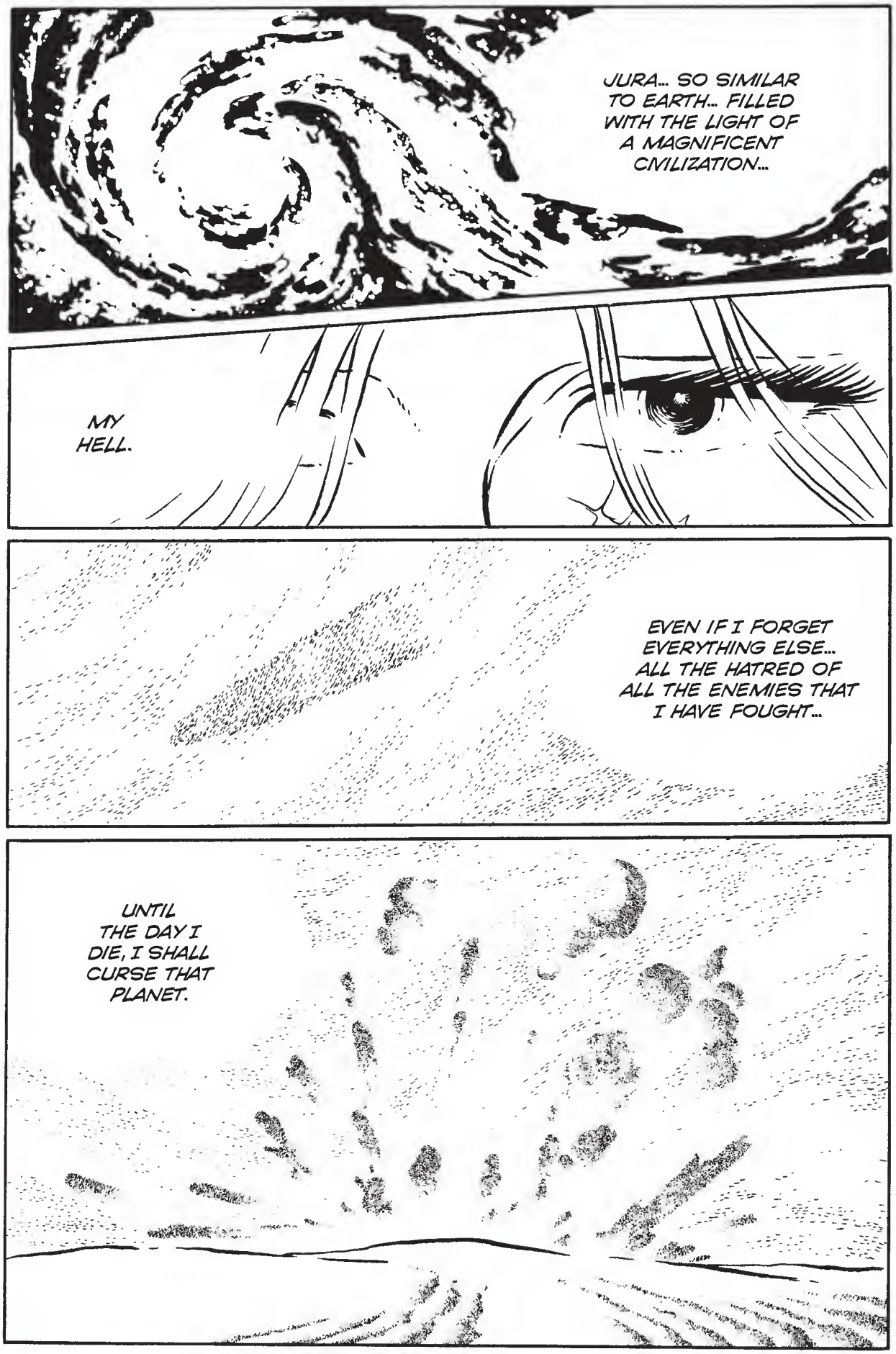
I AM EMERALDAS. MY HOME IS ENDLESS SPACE... AND NO MATTER WHERE MY JOURNEY ENDS, WHEN MY LIFE EXPIRES, I SHALL HAVE NO REGRETS...


OUR STORIES BEGIN MUCH THE SAME. AGES AGO, I WAS A RUNAWAY ON A HANDMADE VESSEL...

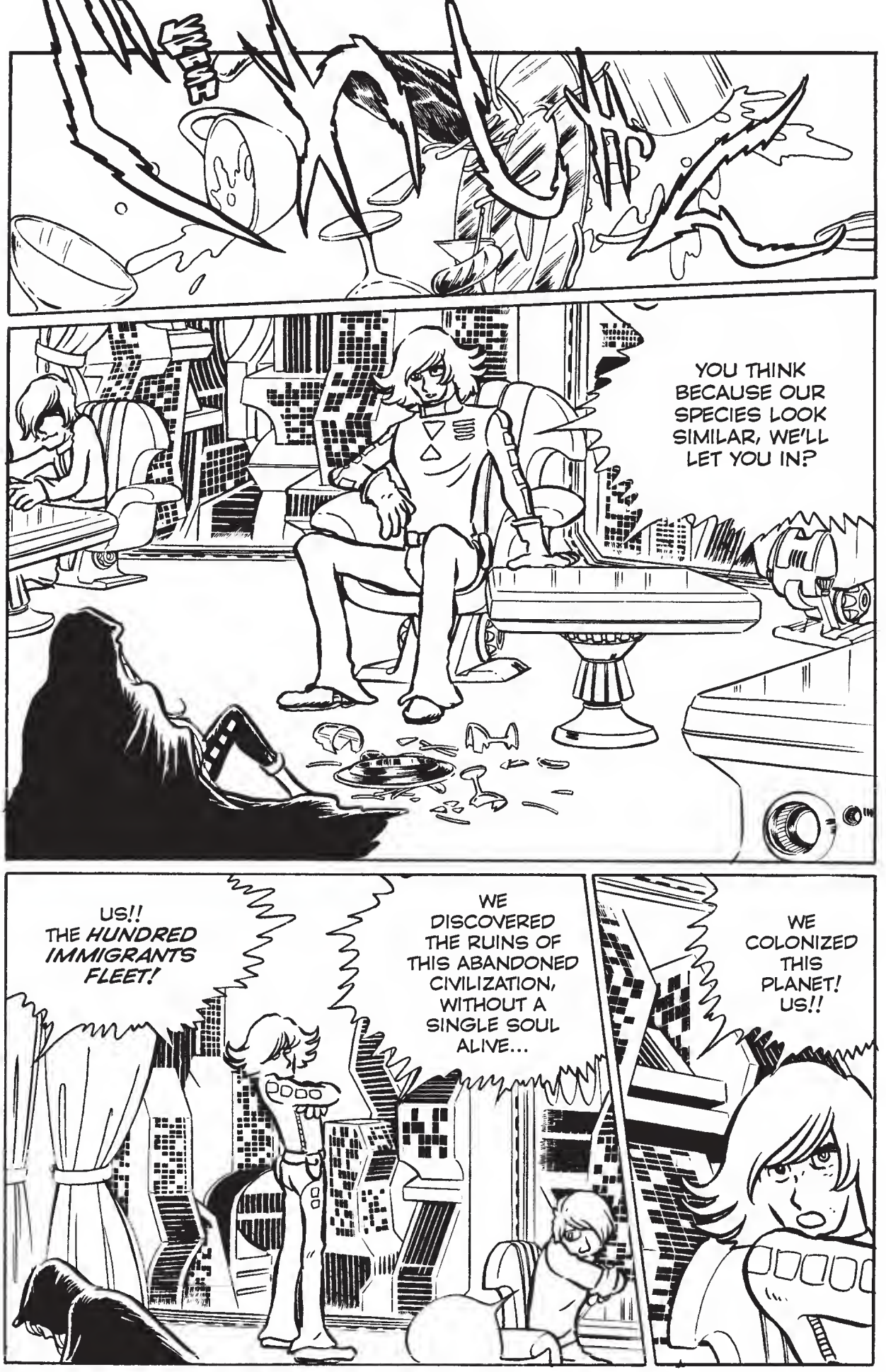
I NOW SET ASIDE THE TALE OF MY MEETING WITH HIROSHI UMINO, WHO HAD LEFT THE EARTH BEHIND. I RECALL MY PERSONAL VOYAGE...

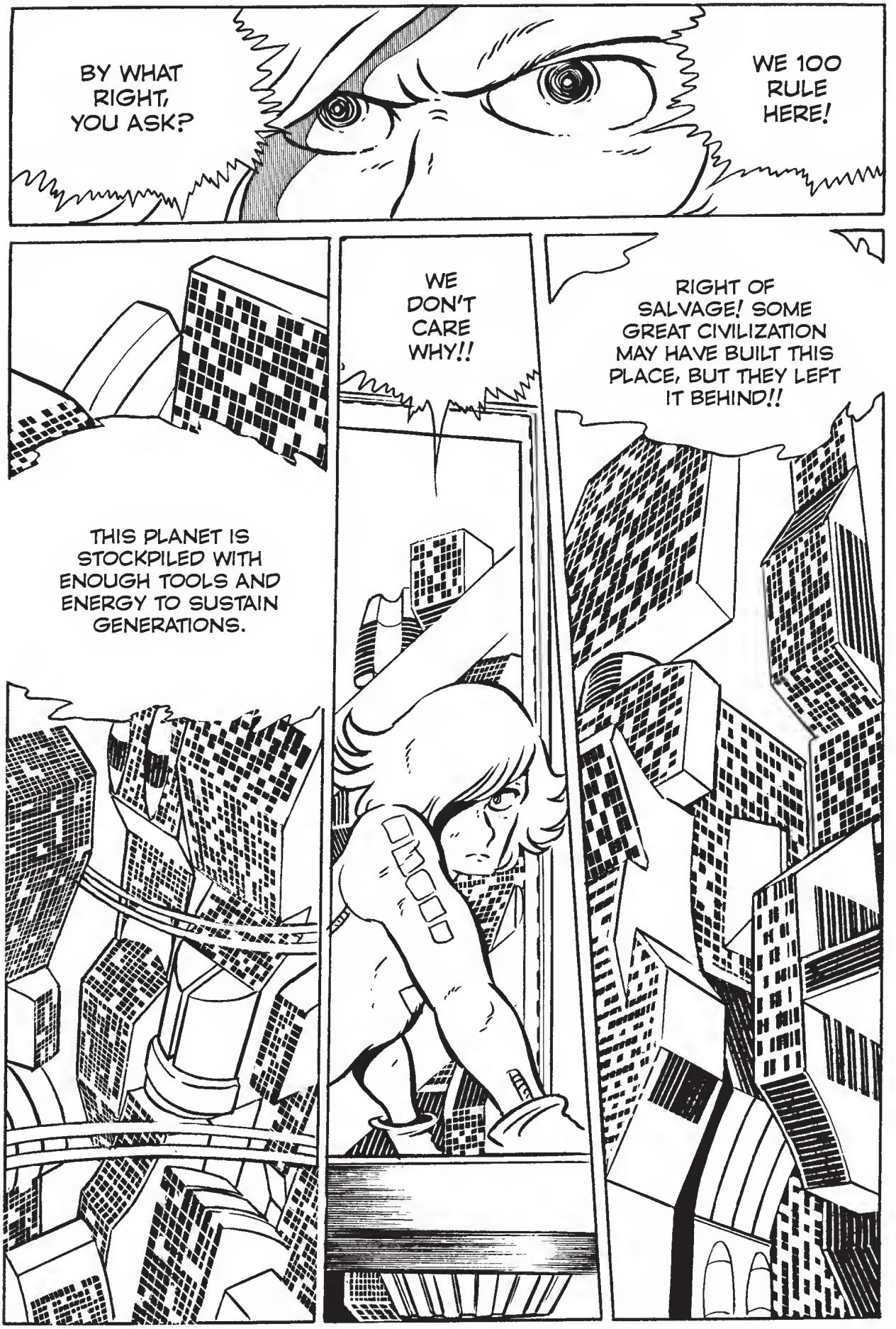

THIS WAS LONG BEFORE I MET MY SOULMATE AND TRAVELING COMPANION—MY SHIP, THE QUEEN EMERALDAS...
THE EARTH HAD YET TO DISCOVER THE AMMONITE SOLAR SYSTEM... HIDDEN BEHIND THE HORSEHEAD NEBULA OFF THE SHOULDER OF ORION...

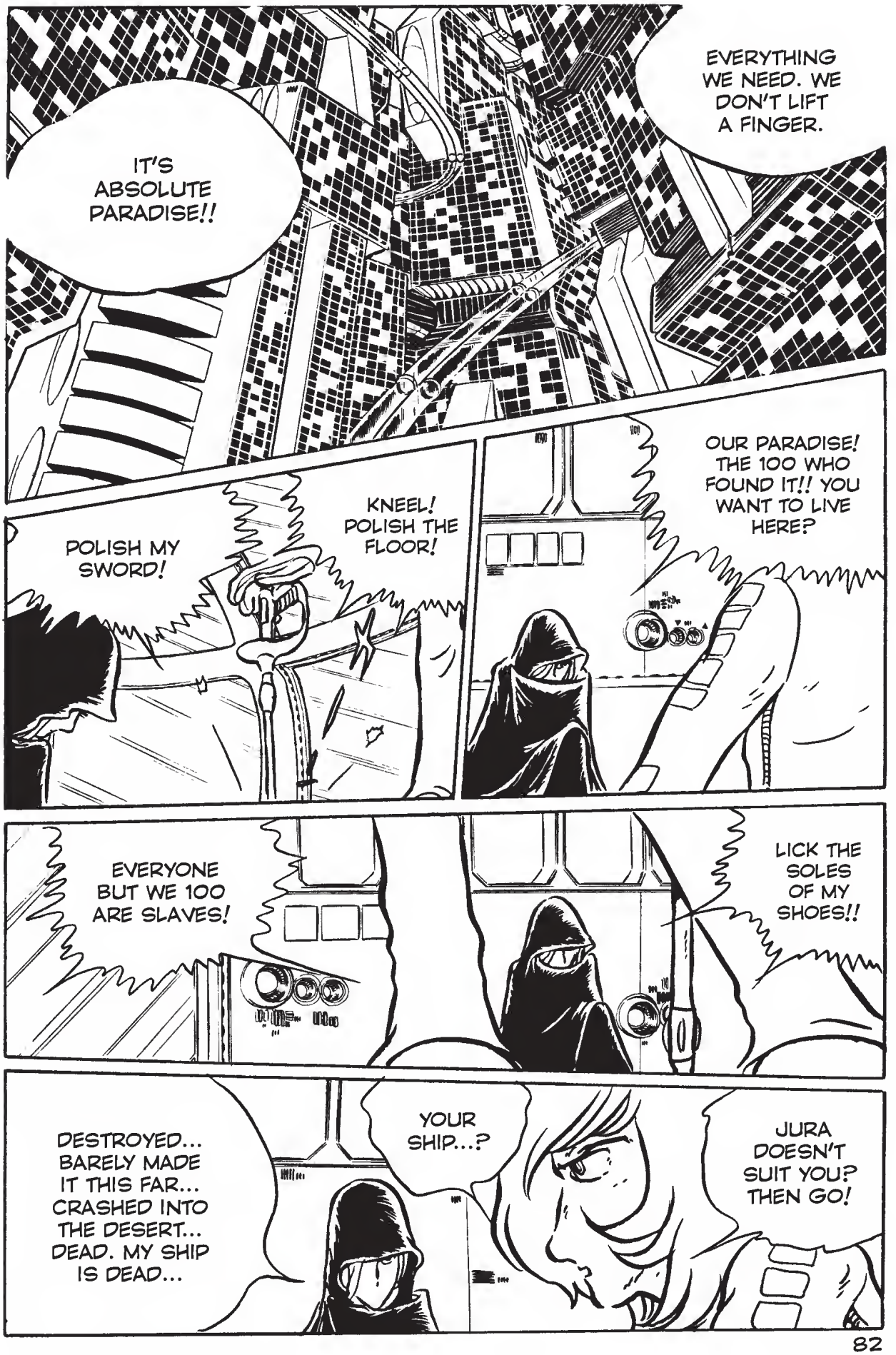
I LANDED ON THE THIRD PLANET IN THE SYSTEM, A PLACE WITH THE ROMANTIC NAME OF JURA...

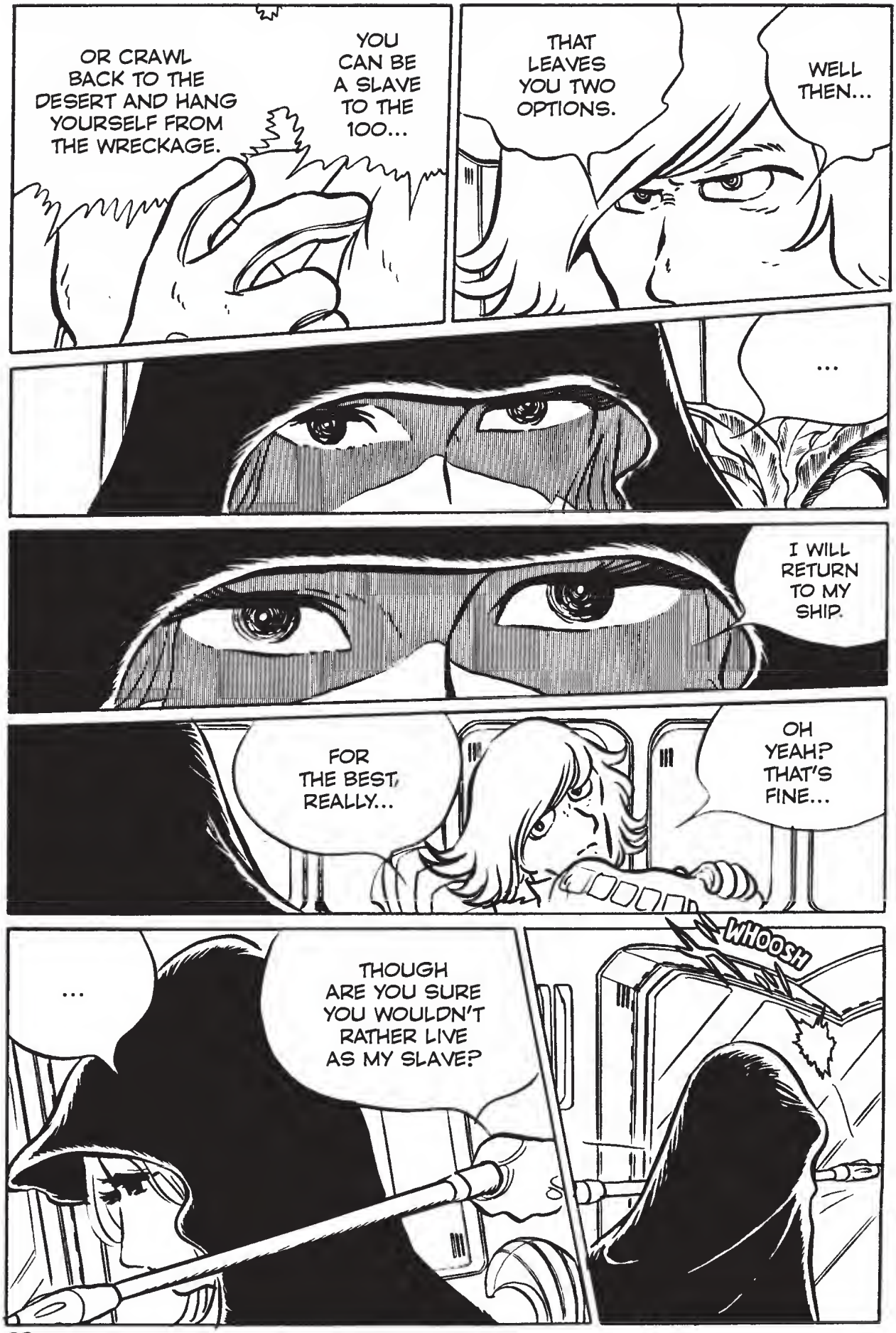

JURA... SO SIMILAR TO EARTH... FILLED WITH THE LIGHT OF A MAGNIFICENT CIVILIZATION...
MY HELL.
EVEN IF I FORGET EVERYTHING ELSE... ALL THE HATRED OF ALL THE ENEMIES THAT I HAVE FOUGHT...
UNTIL THE DAY I DIE, I SHALL CURSE THAT PLANET.

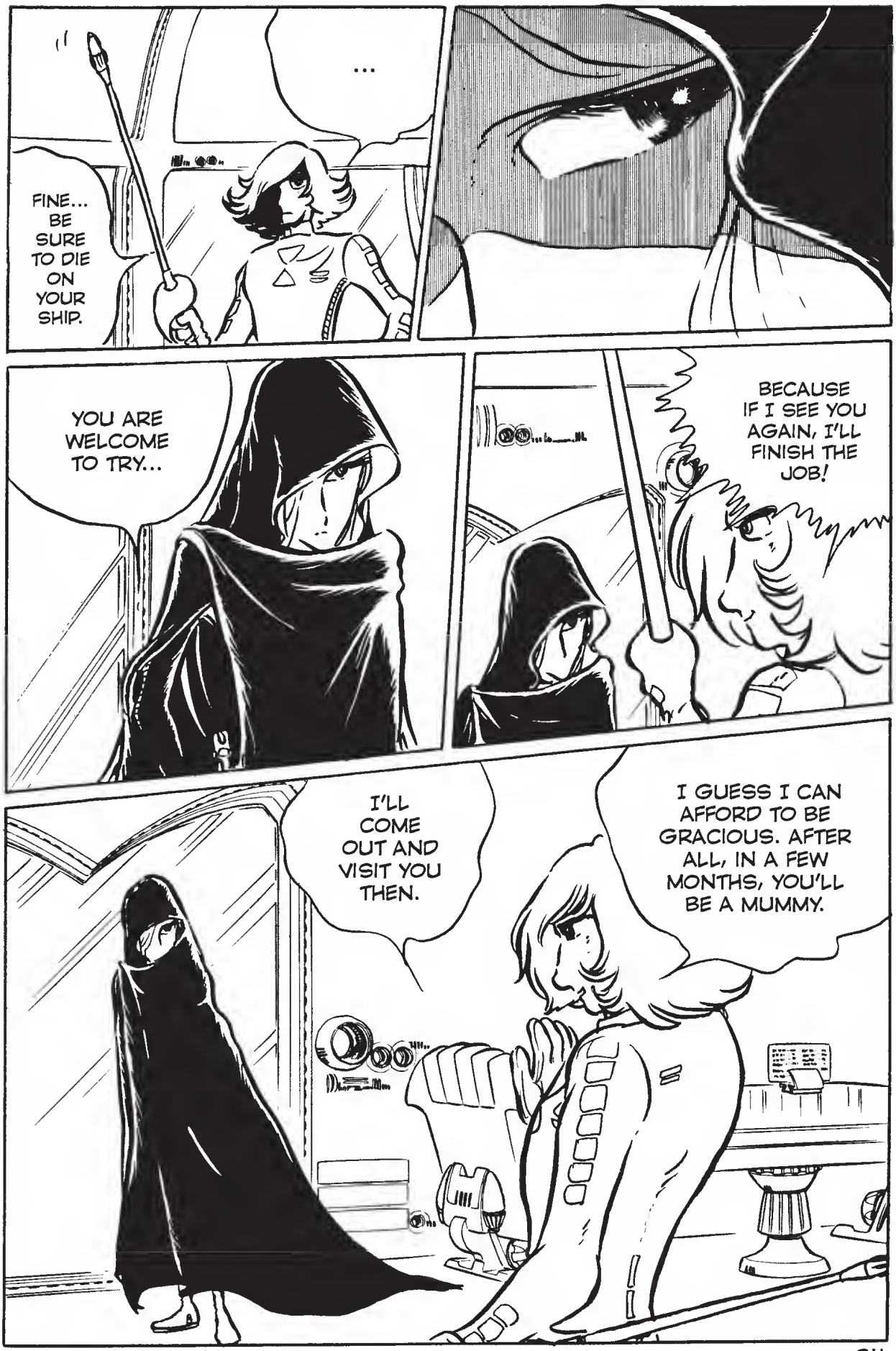
JURA. THE THIRD PLANET OF THE AMMONITE SOLAR SYSTEM...

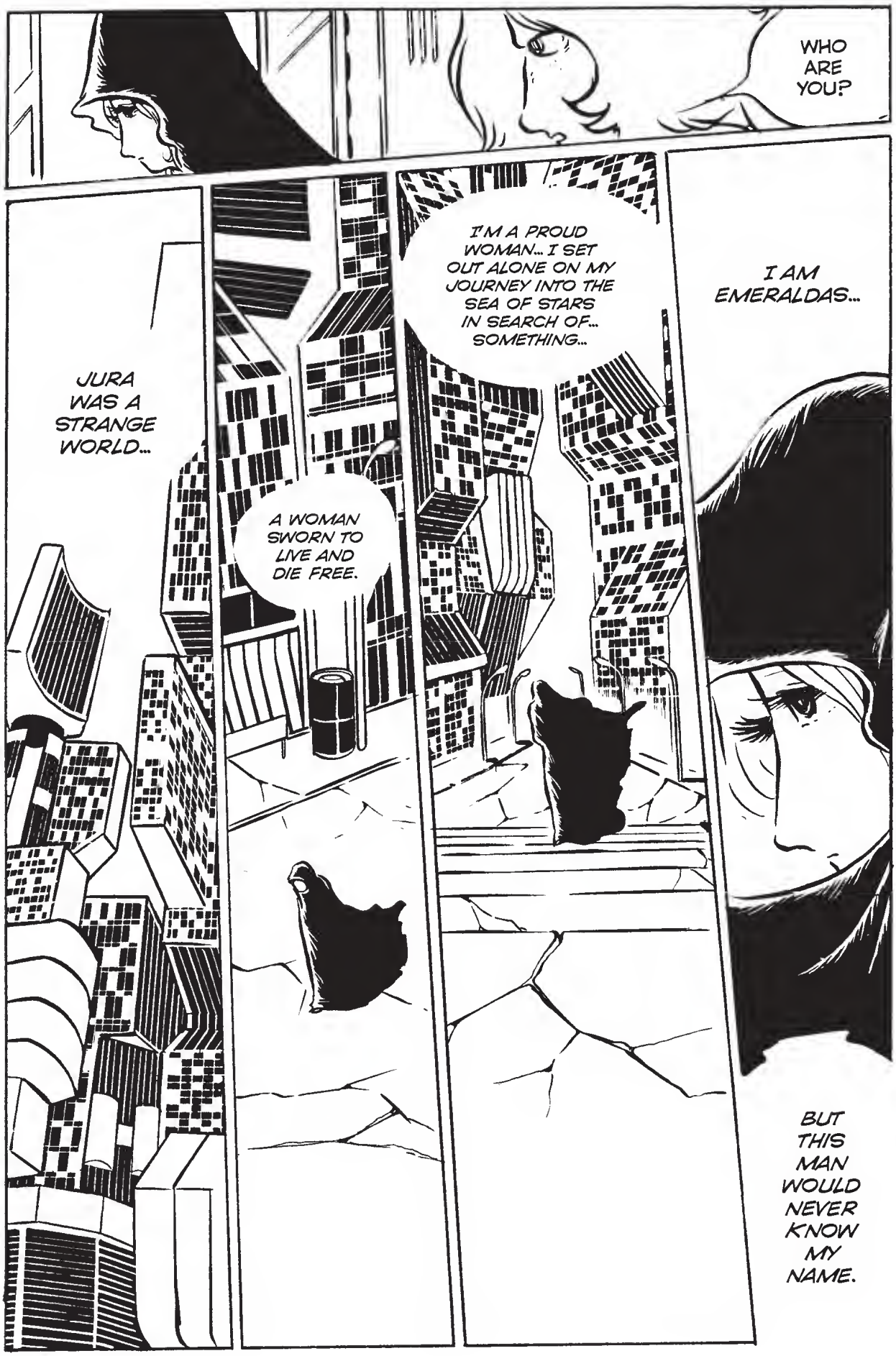

KRSH
YOU THINK BECAUSE OUR SPECIES LOOK SIMILAR, WE'LL LET YOU IN?
WE COLONIZED THIS PLANET! US!!
WE DISCOVERED THE RUINS OF THIS ABANDONED CIVILIZATION, WITHOUT A SINGLE SOUL ALIVE...
US!! THE *HUNDRED IMMIGRANTS FLEET!*

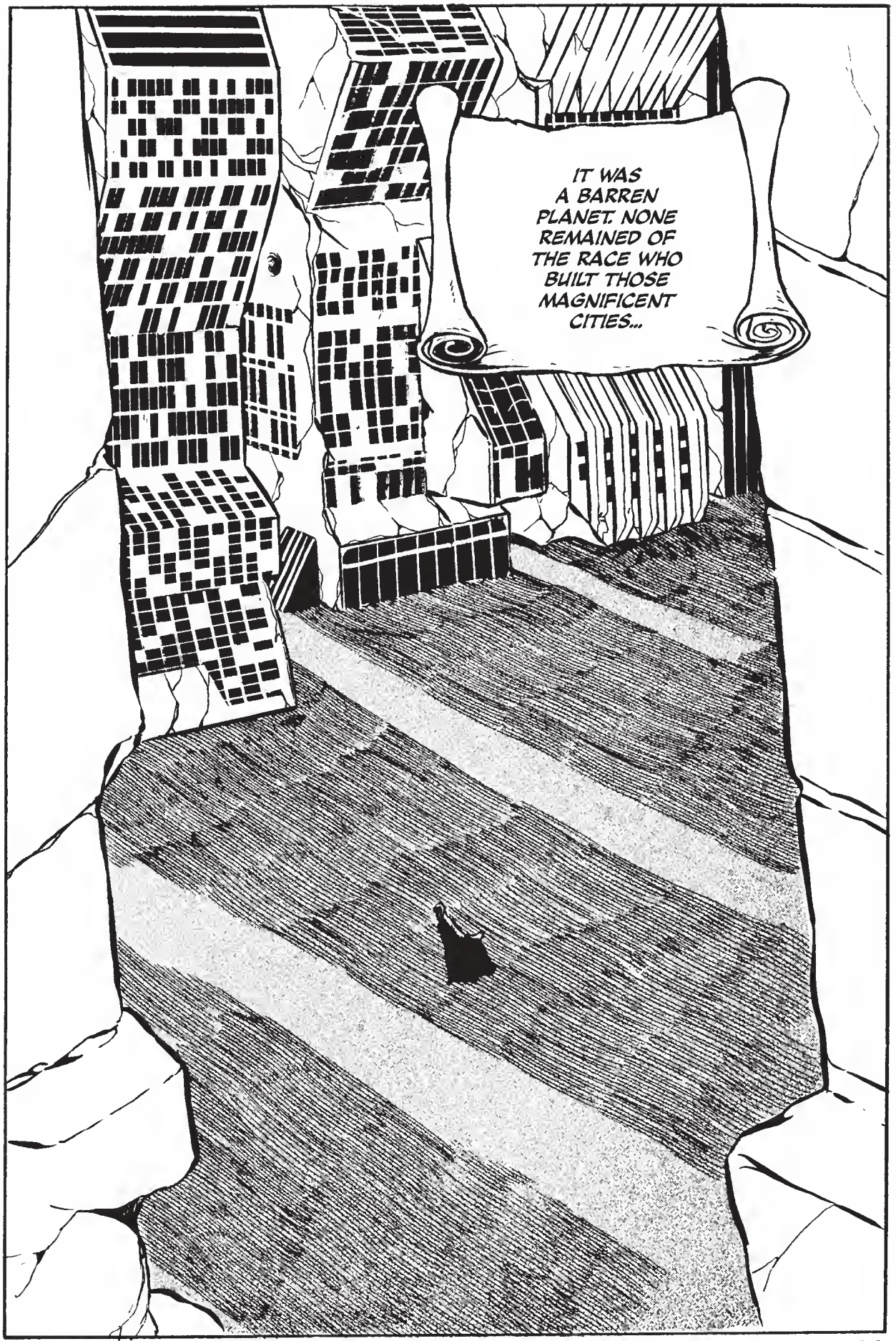

BY WHAT RIGHT, YOU ASK?
WE 100 RULE HERE!
THIS PLANET IS STOCKPILED WITH ENOUGH TOOLS AND ENERGY TO SUSTAIN GENERATIONS.
WE DON'T CARE WHY!!
RIGHT OF SALVAGE! SOME GREAT CIVILIZATION MAY HAVE BUILT THIS PLACE, BUT THEY LEFT IT BEHIND!!

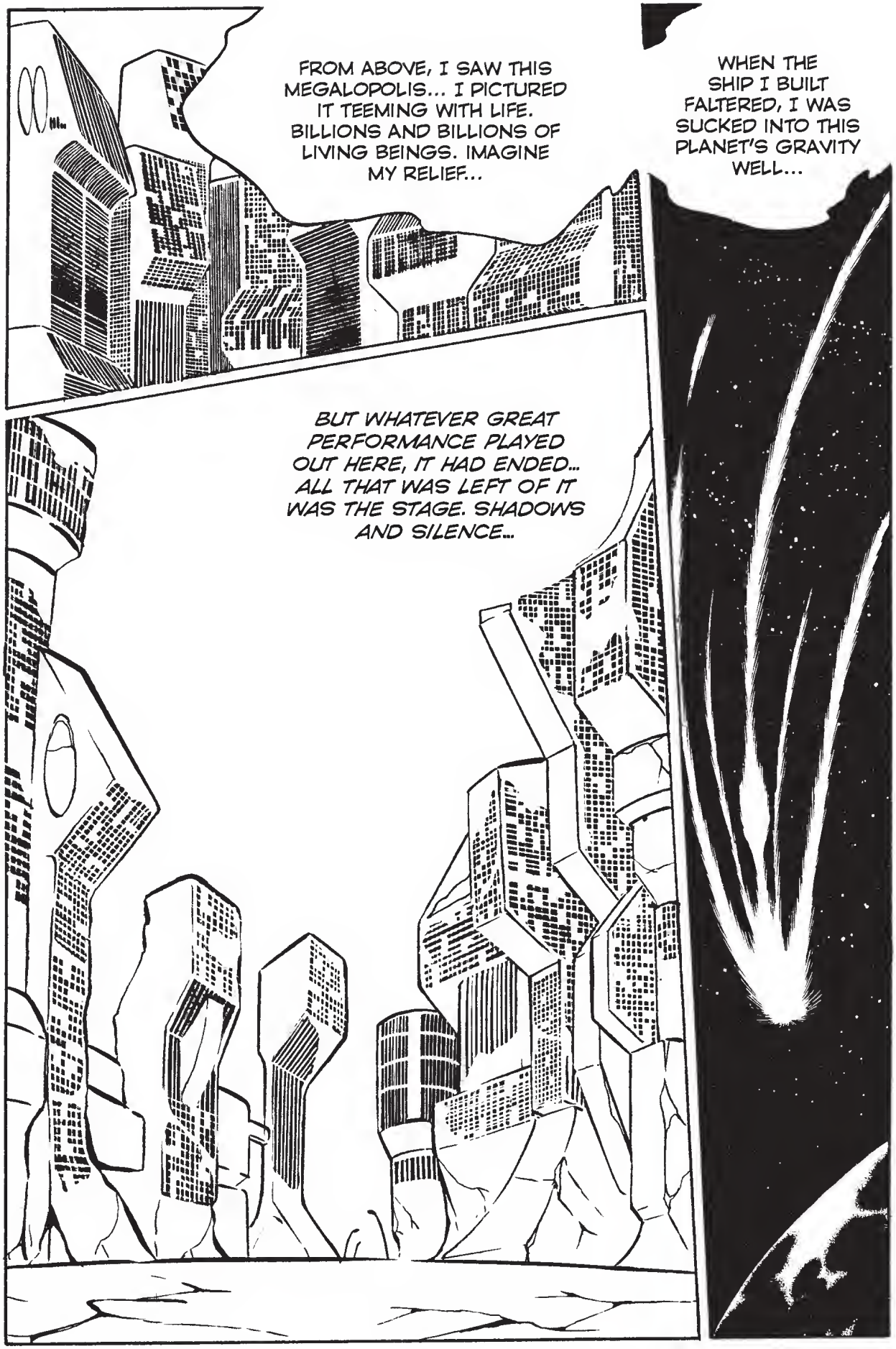

IT'S ABSOLUTE PARADISE!!
EVERYTHING WE NEED. WE DON'T LIFT A FINGER.
POLISH MY SWORD!
KNEEL! POLISH THE FLOOR!
OUR PARADISE! THE 100 WHO FOUND IT!! YOU WANT TO LIVE HERE?
EVERYONE BUT WE 100 ARE SLAVES!
LICK THE SOLES OF MY SHOES!!
DESTROYED... BARELY MADE IT THIS FAR... CRASHED INTO THE DESERT... DEAD. MY SHIP IS DEAD...
YOUR SHIP...?
JURA DOESN'T SUIT YOU? THEN GO!

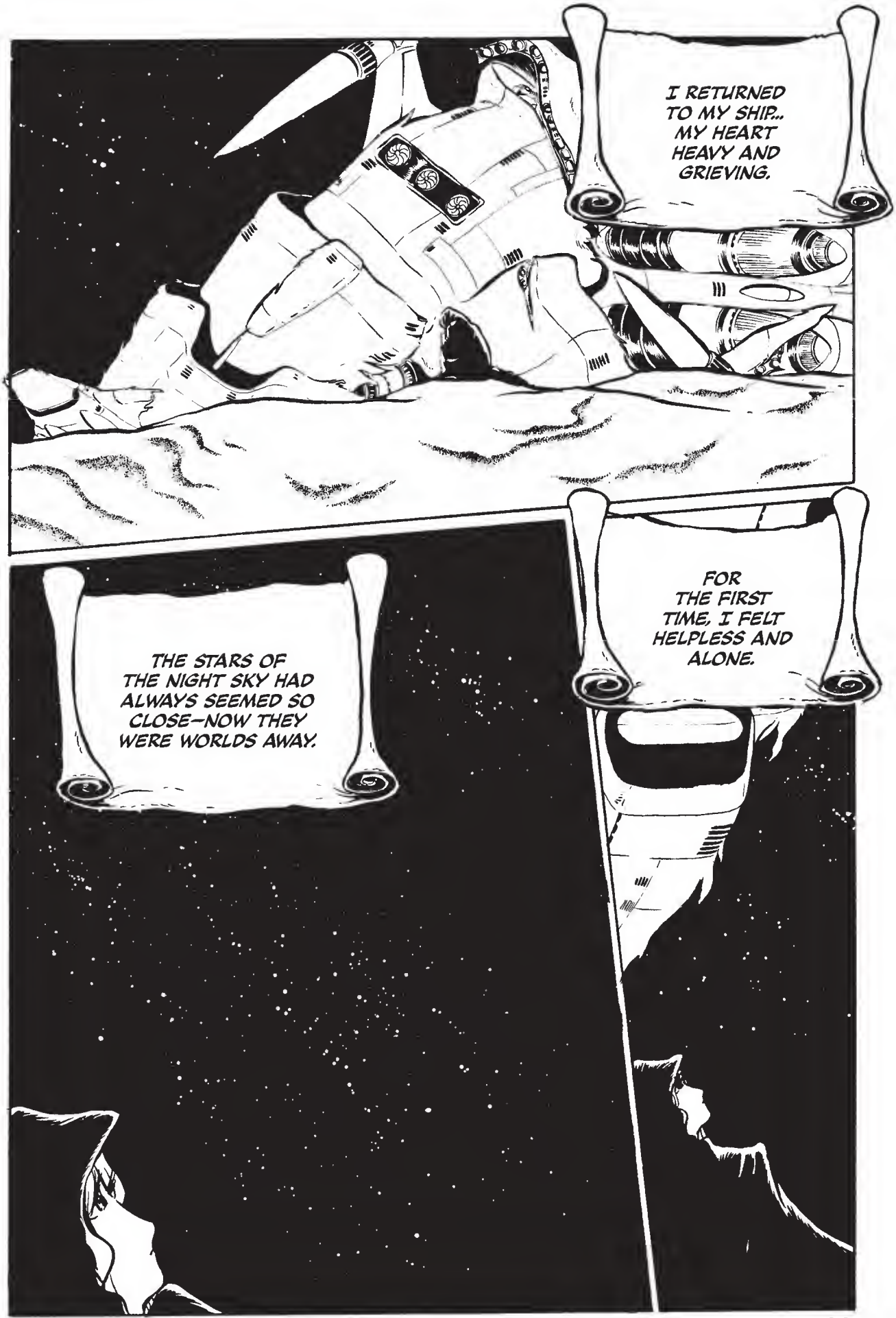

OR CRAWL BACK TO THE DESERT AND HANG YOURSELF FROM THE WRECKAGE.
YOU CAN BE A SLAVE TO THE 100...
THAT LEAVES YOU TWO OPTIONS.
WELL THEN...
...
I WILL RETURN TO MY SHIP.
FOR THE BEST, REALLY...
OH YEAH? THAT'S FINE...
...
THOUGH ARE YOU SURE YOU WOULDN'T RATHER LIVE AS MY SLAVE?
WHOOSH

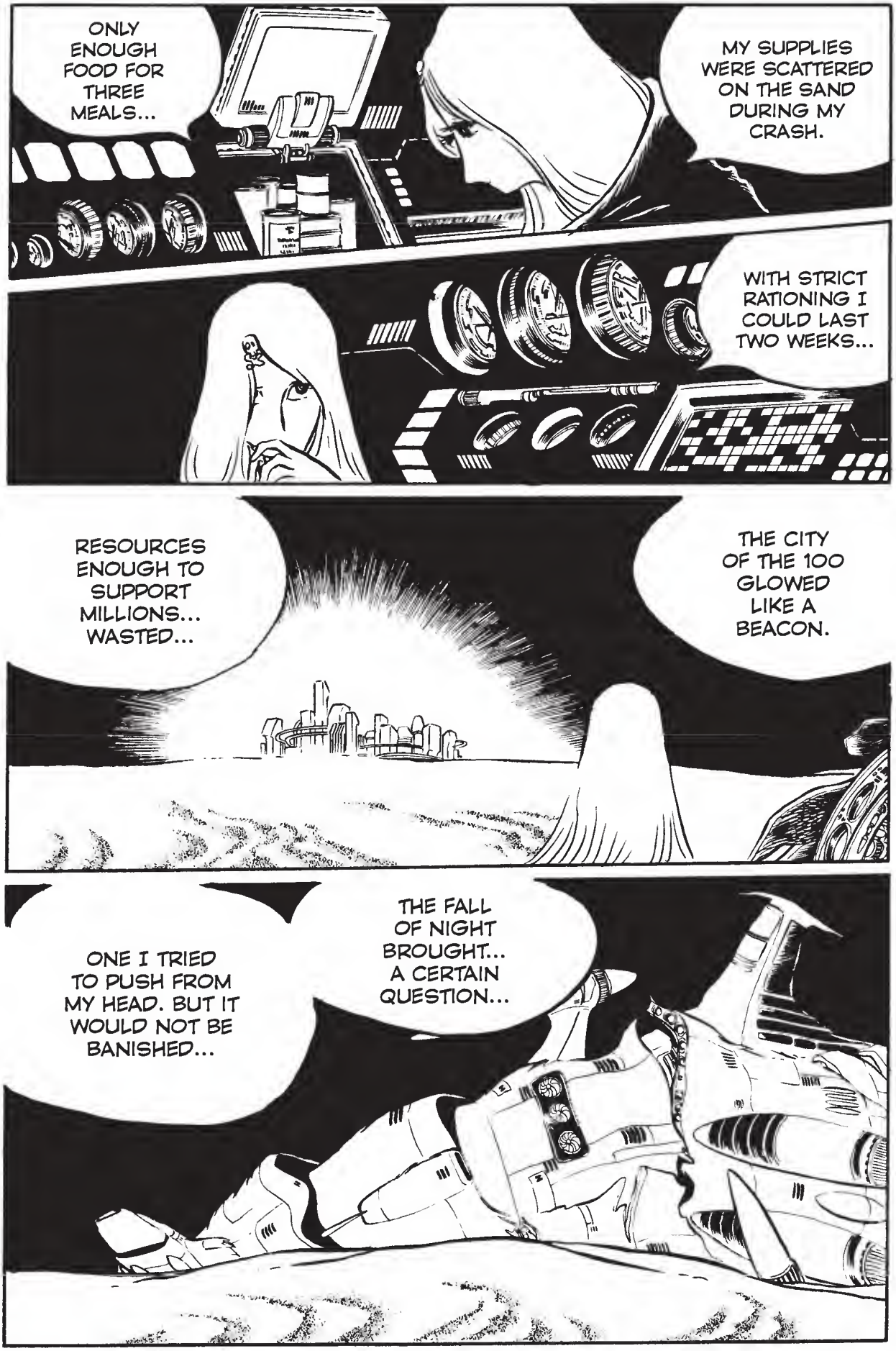

...
FINE... BE SURE TO DIE ON YOUR SHIP.
BECAUSE IF I SEE YOU AGAIN, I'LL FINISH THE JOB!
YOU ARE WELCOME TO TRY...
I GUESS I CAN AFFORD TO BE GRACIOUS. AFTER ALL, IN A FEW MONTHS, YOU'LL BE A MUMMY.
I'LL COME OUT AND VISIT YOU THEN.


WHO ARE YOU?
I AM EMERALDAS...
I'M A PROUD WOMAN... I SET OUT ALONE ON MY JOURNEY INTO THE SEA OF STARS IN SEARCH OF... SOMETHING...
JURA WAS A STRANGE WORLD...
A WOMAN SWORN TO LIVE AND DIE FREE.
BUT THIS MAN WOULD NEVER KNOW MY NAME.

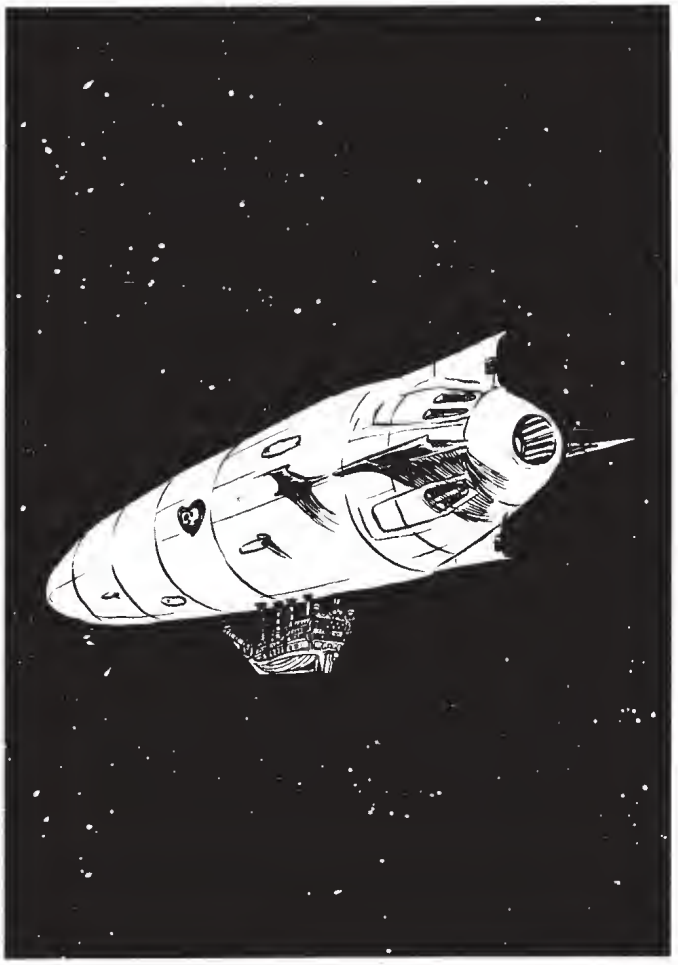

IT WAS A BARREN PLANET. NONE REMAINED OF THE RACE WHO BUILT THOSE MAGNIFICENT CITIES...

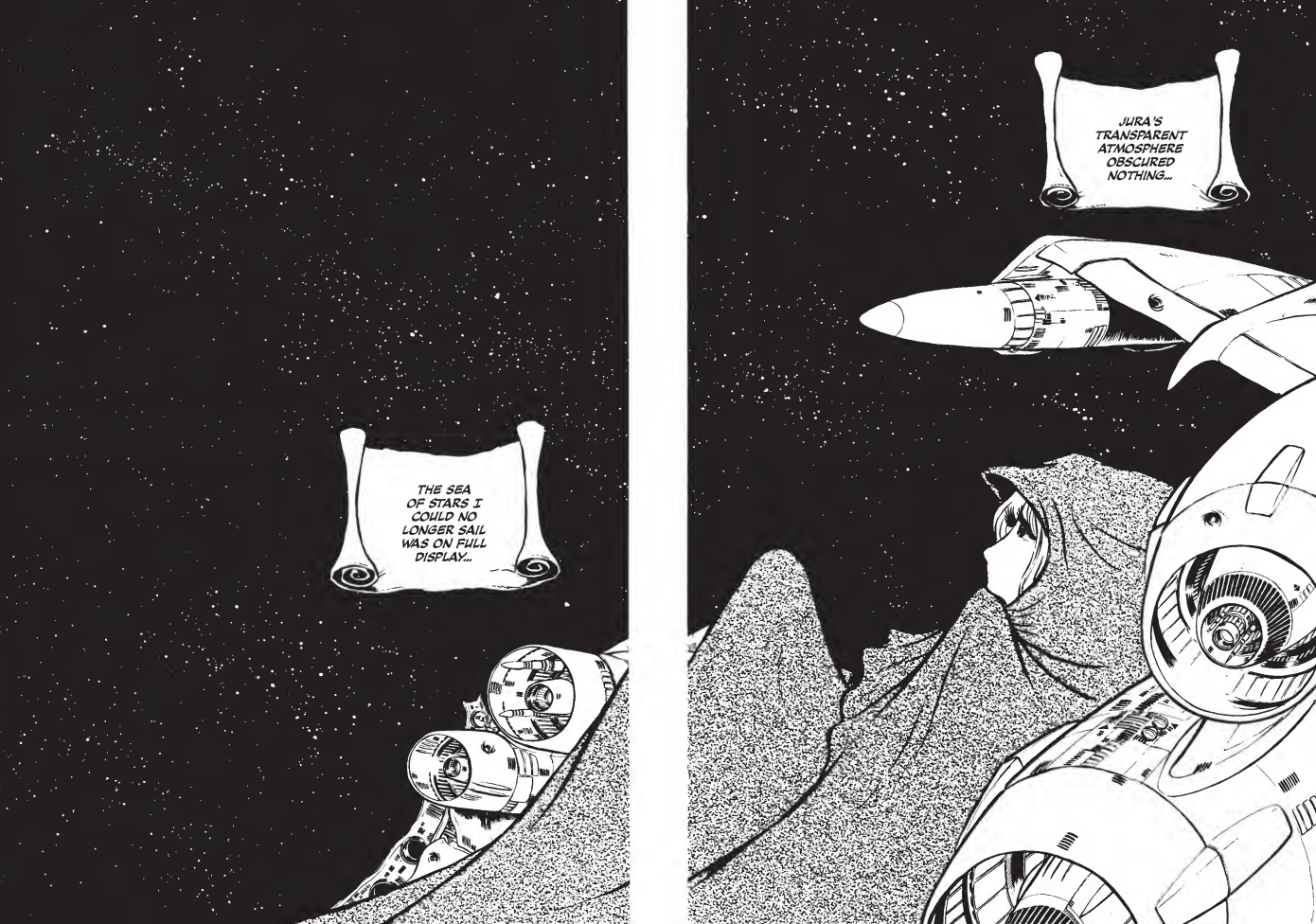

FROM ABOVE, I SAW THIS MEGALOPOLIS... I PICTURED IT TEEMING WITH LIFE. BILLIONS AND BILLIONS OF LIVING BEINGS. IMAGINE MY RELIEF...
WHEN THE SHIP I BUILT FALTERED, I WAS SUCKED INTO THIS PLANET'S GRAVITY WELL...
BUT WHATEVER GREAT PERFORMANCE PLAYED OUT HERE, IT HAD ENDED... ALL THAT WAS LEFT OF IT WAS THE STAGE. SHADOWS AND SILENCE...


I RETURNED TO MY SHIP... MY HEART HEAVY AND GRIEVING.
FOR THE FIRST TIME, I FELT HELPLESS AND ALONE.
THE STARS OF THE NIGHT SKY HAD ALWAYS SEEMED SO CLOSE—NOW THEY WERE WORLDS AWAY.

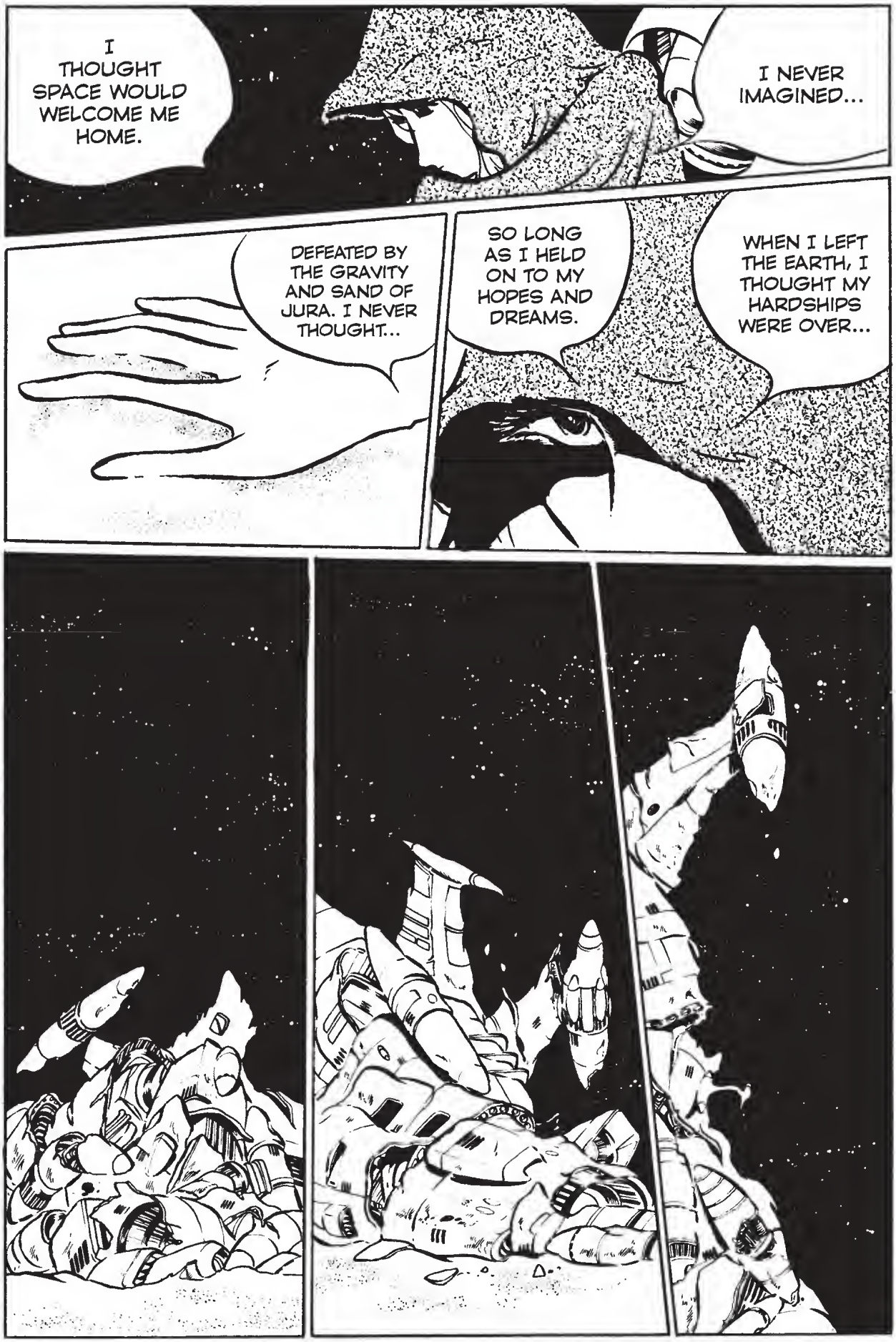

ONLY ENOUGH FOOD FOR THREE MEALS...
MY SUPPLIES WERE SCATTERED ON THE SAND DURING MY CRASH.
WITH STRICT RATIONING I COULD LAST TWO WEEKS...
RESOURCES ENOUGH TO SUPPORT MILLIONS... WASTED...
THE CITY OF THE 100 GLOWED LIKE A BEACON.
ONE I TRIED TO PUSH FROM MY HEAD. BUT IT WOULD NOT BE BANISHED...
THE FALL OF NIGHT BROUGHT... A CERTAIN QUESTION...

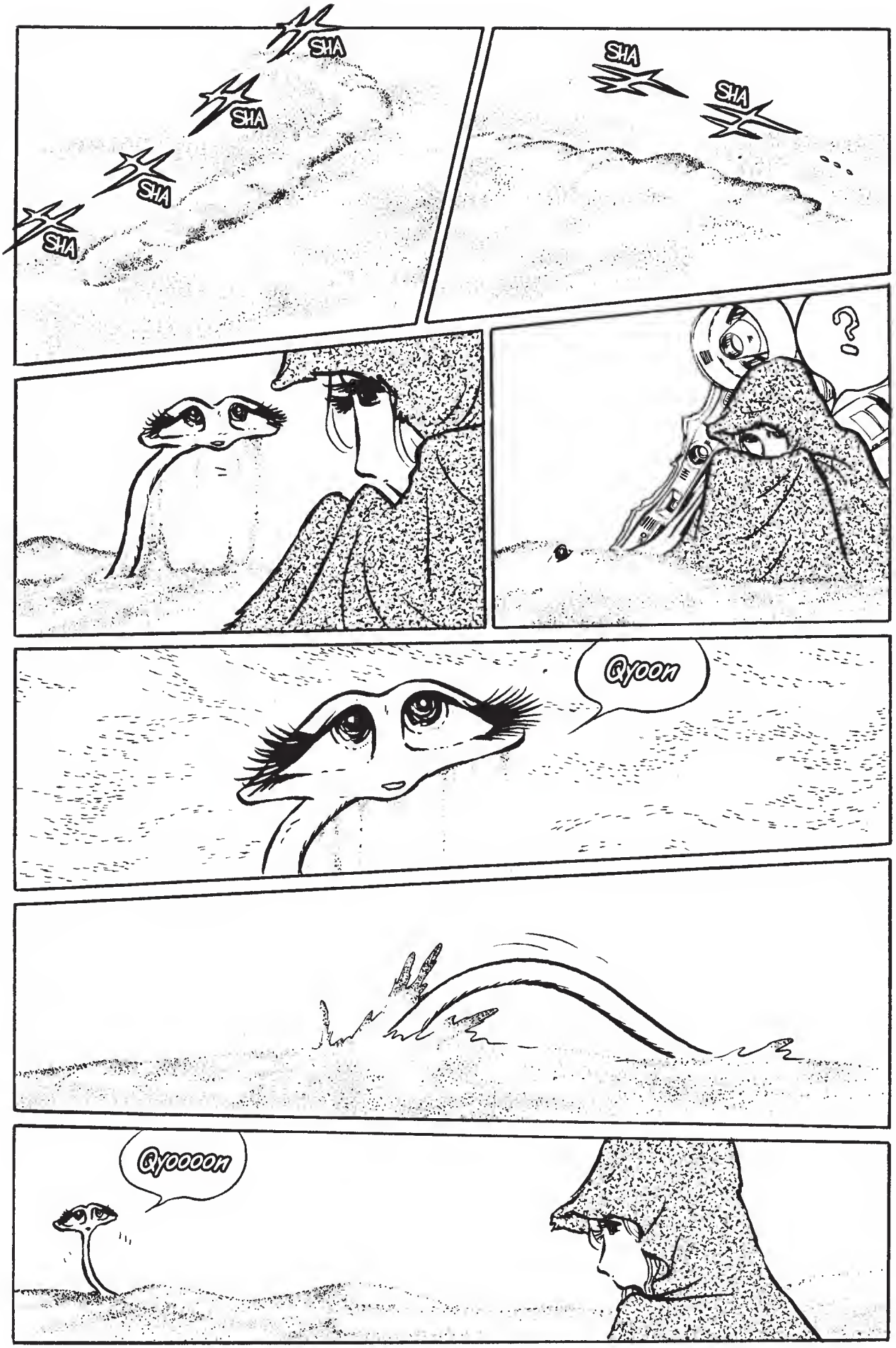
WHERE WERE ALL THE PEOPLE...?
I AM EMERALDAS. AND JURA WAS A STRANGE WORLD INDEED...




THE SEA OF STARS I COULD NO LONGER SAIL WAS ON FULL DISPLAY...
JURA'S TRANSPARENT ATMOSPHERE OBSCURED NOTHING...

THE SAND OF JURA WAS LIKE A MONSTER, CONSUMING METAL...
WITH NO POWER TO SUSTAIN IT, MY SHIP RAPIDLY CORRODED...
ONLY MY TEKTITE DAGGER AND SUPER-ALLOY COATED GRAVITYSABER SURVIVED...
MY SHIP TURNED TO DUST... EVEN THE BUTTONS.
SHREEEEEENNNNUU


I THOUGHT SPACE WOULD WELCOME ME HOME.
I NEVER IMAGINED...
DEFEATED BY THE GRAVITY AND SAND OF JURA. I NEVER THOUGHT...
SO LONG AS I HELD ON TO MY HOPES AND DREAMS.
WHEN I LEFT THE EARTH, I THOUGHT MY HARDSHIPS WERE OVER...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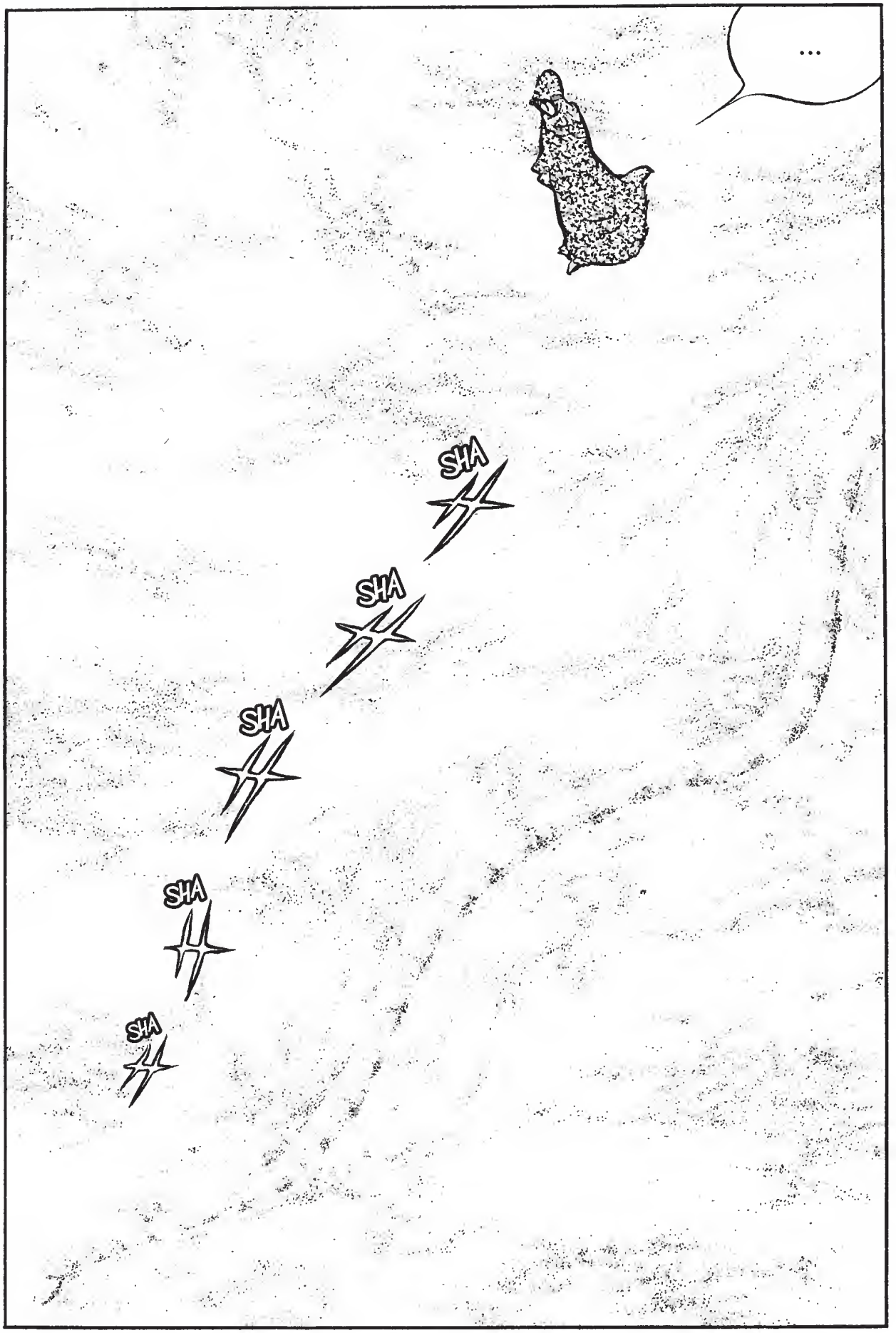
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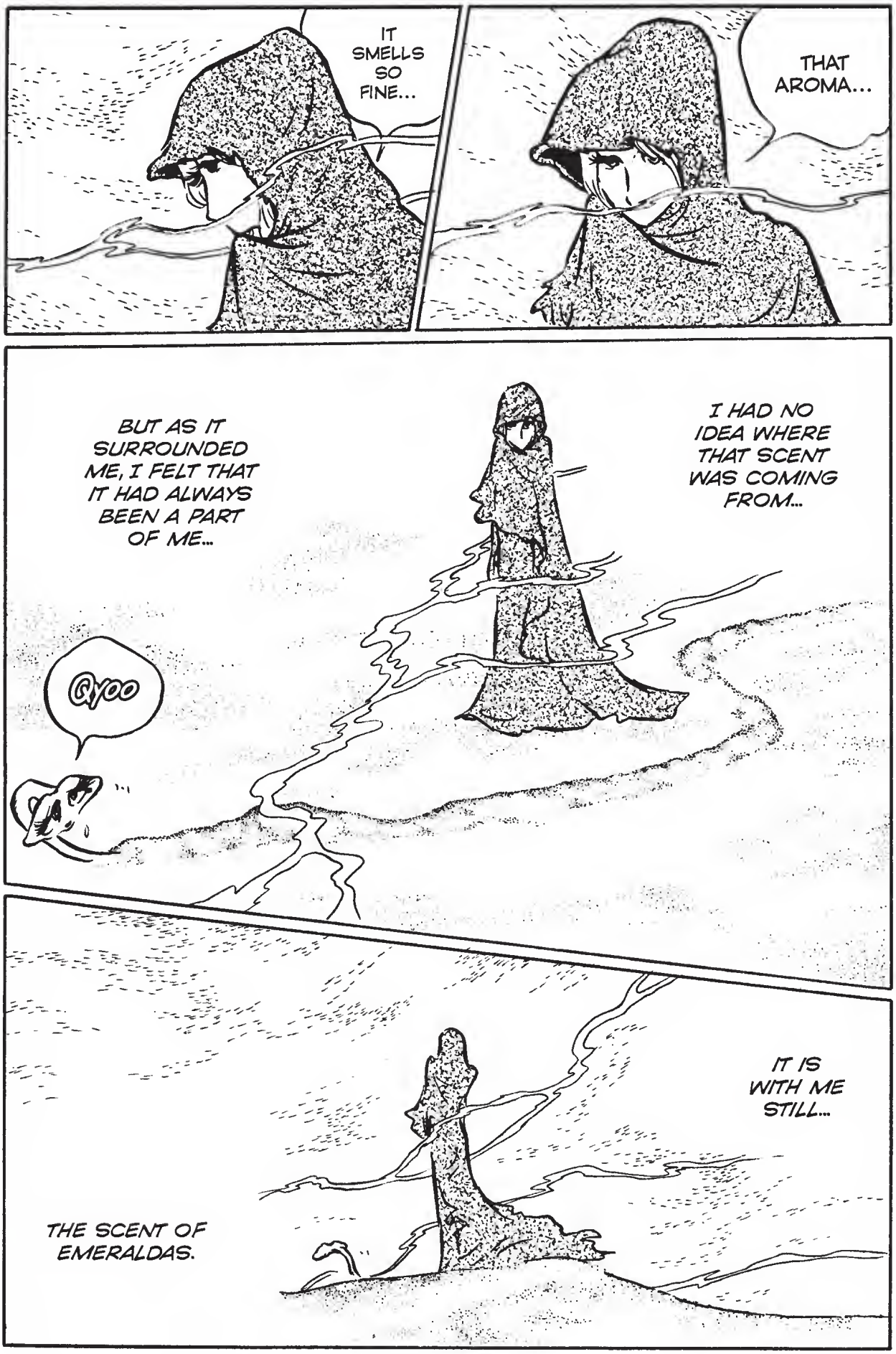
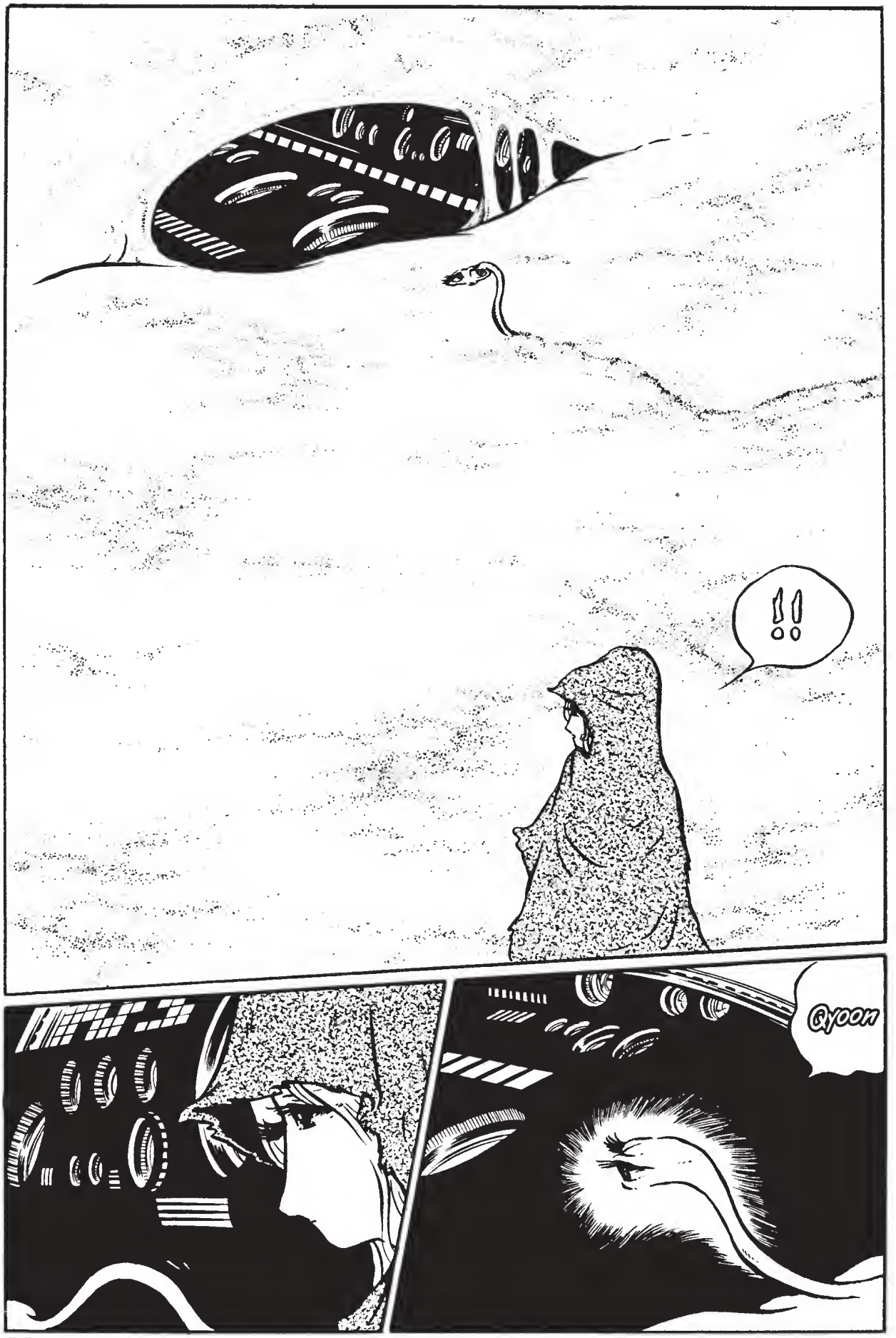
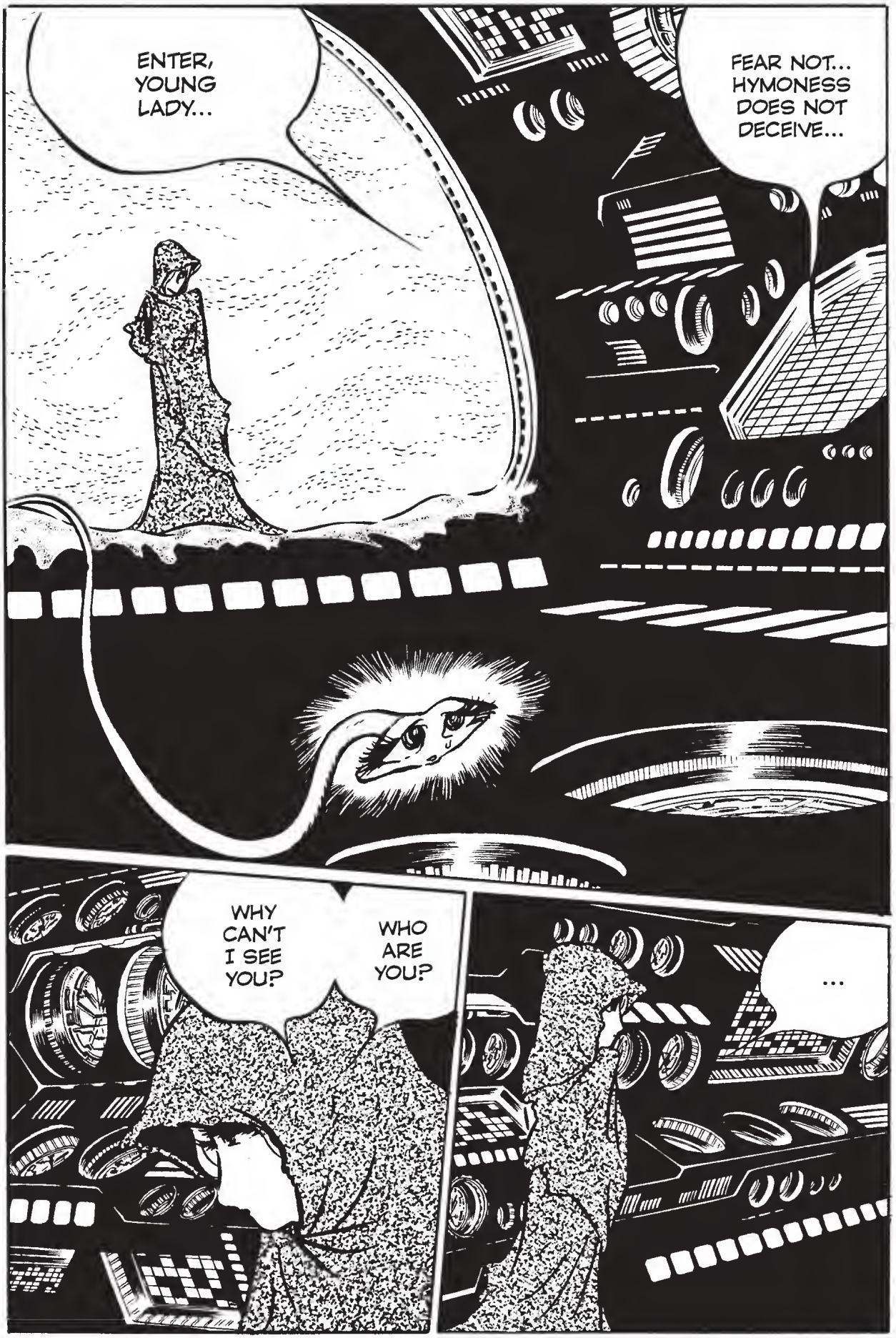
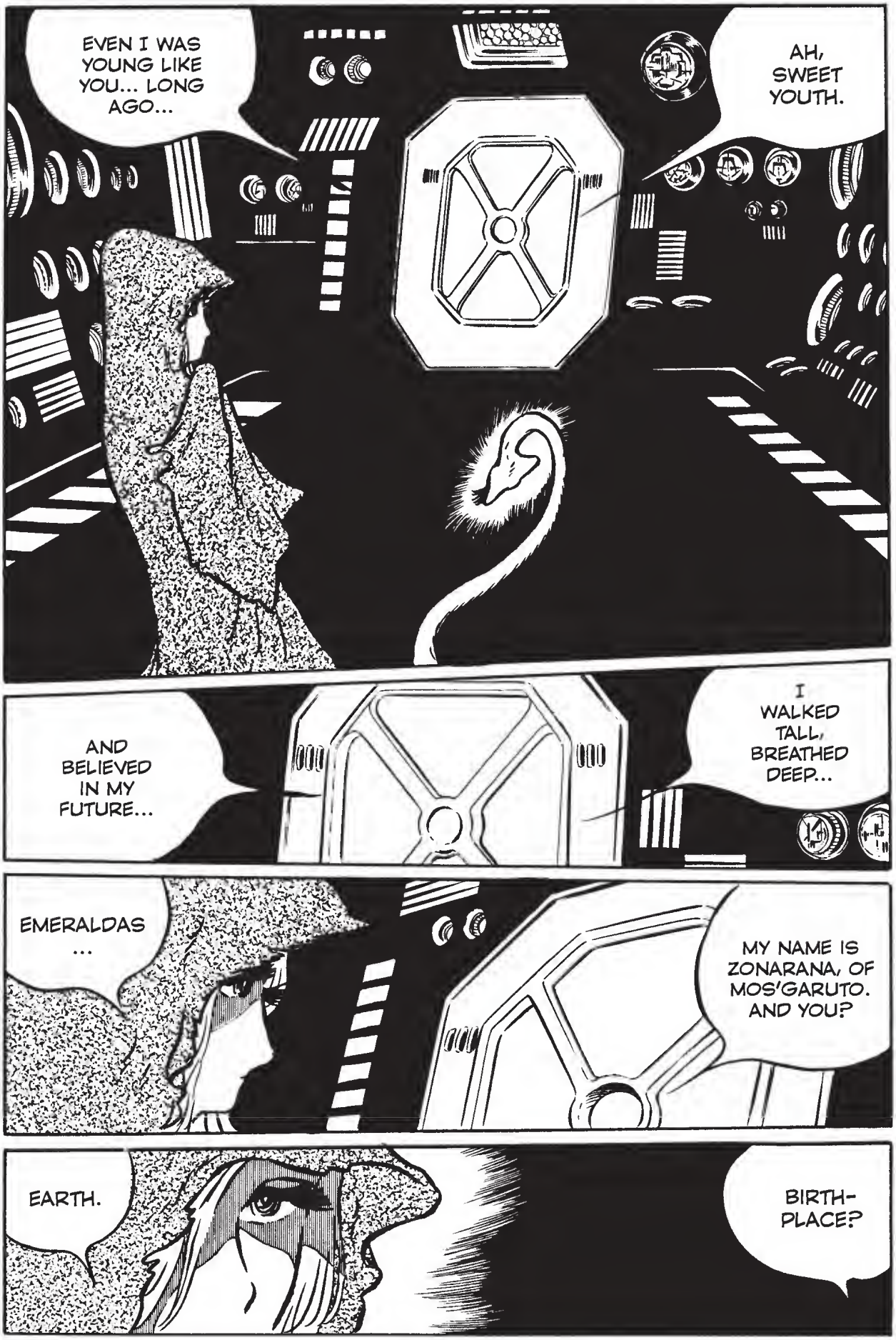
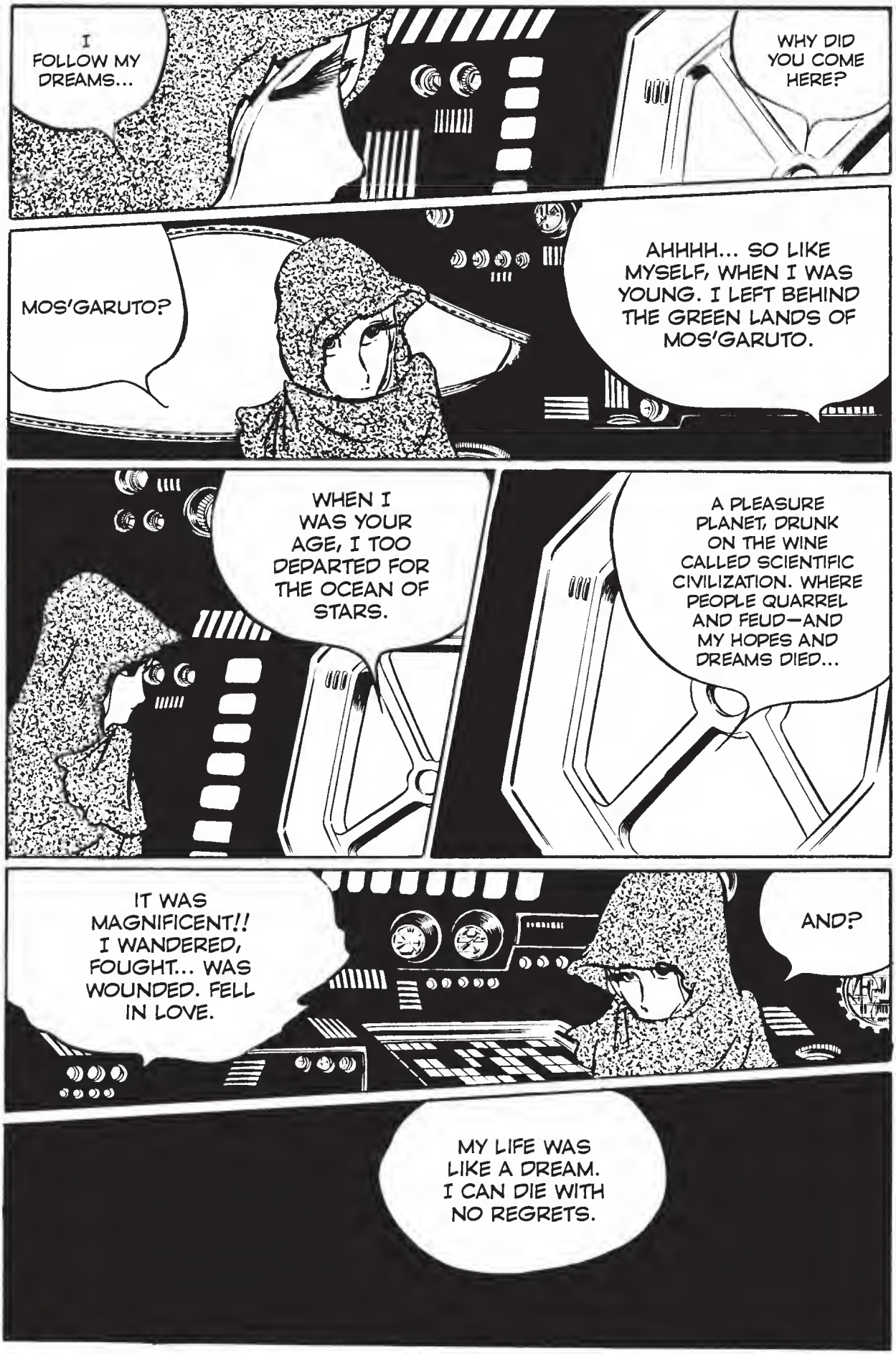
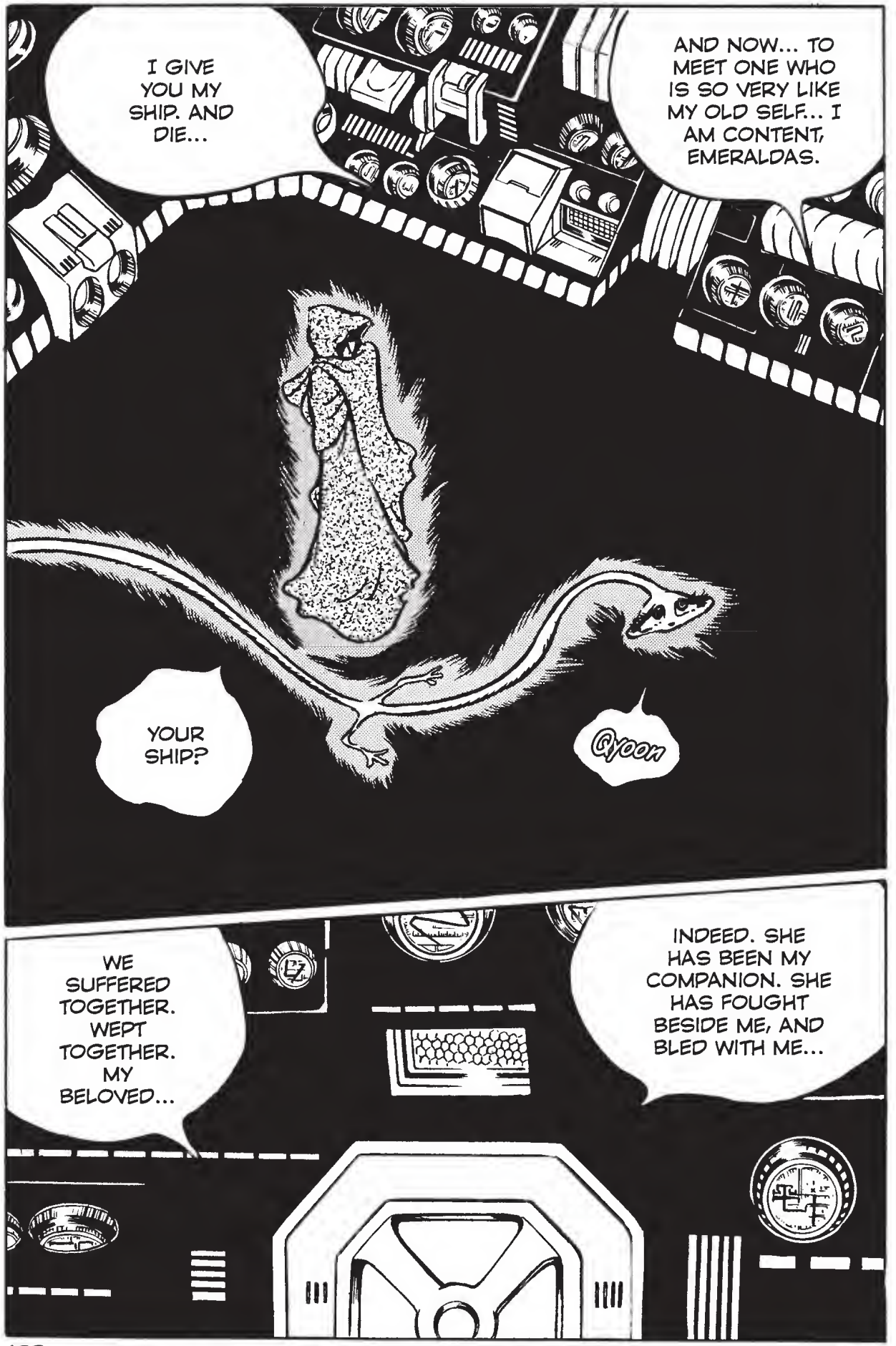

IT SMELLS SO FINE...
THAT AROMA...
BUT AS IT SURROUNDED ME, I FELT THAT IT HAD ALWAYS BEEN A PART OF ME...
I HAD NO IDEA WHERE THAT SCENT WAS COMING FROM...
Qyoo
IT IS WITH ME STILL...
THE SCENT OF EMERALDAS.

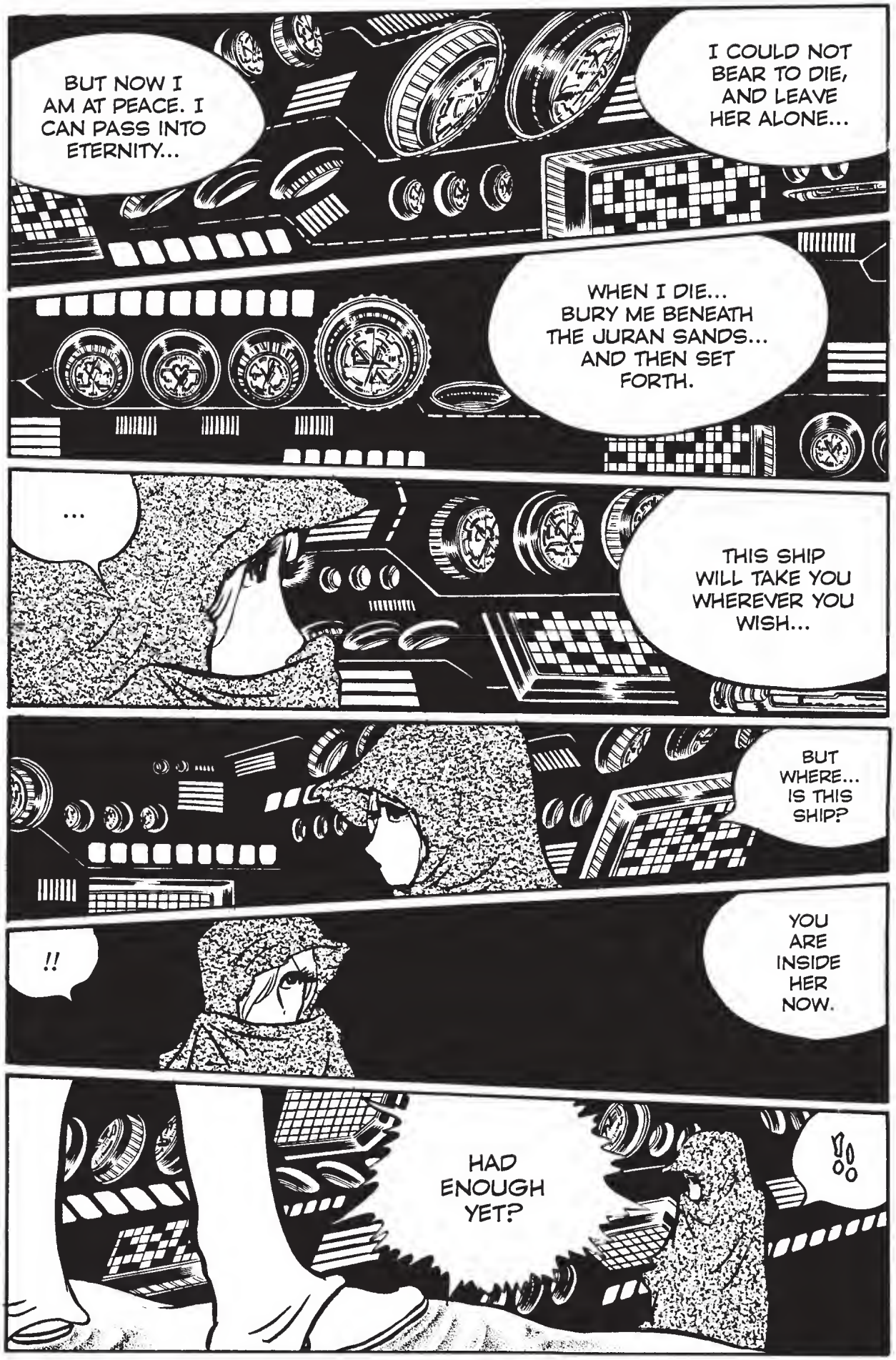

!!
Qyoon

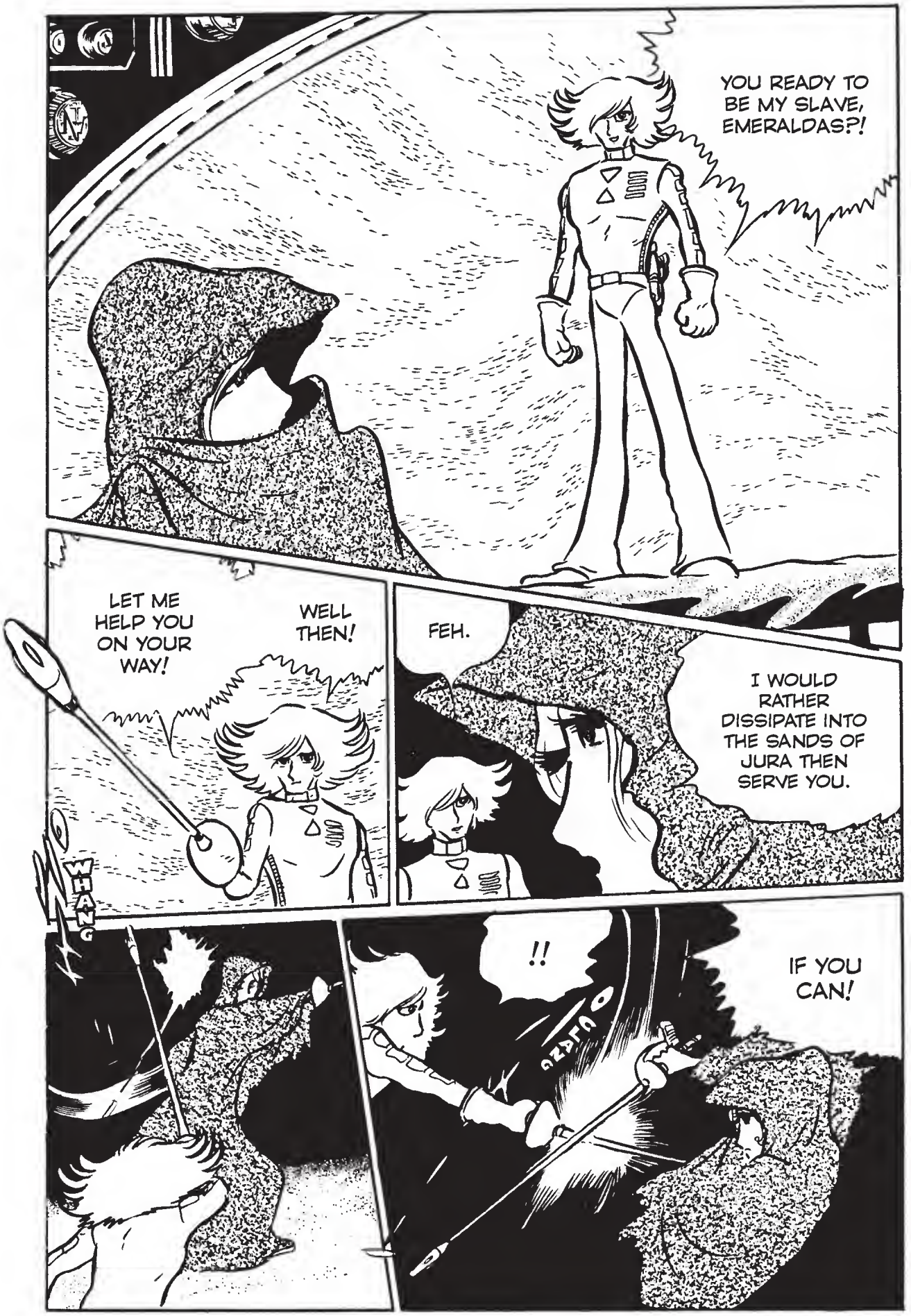

ENTER, YOUNG LADY...
FEAR NOT... HYMONESS DOES NOT DECEIVE...
WHY CAN'T I SEE YOU?
WHO ARE YOU?
...


EVEN I WAS YOUNG LIKE YOU... LONG AGO...
AH, SWEET YOUTH.
AND BELIEVED IN MY FUTURE...
I WALKED TALL, BREATHED DEEP...
EMERALDAS ...
MY NAME IS ZONARANA, OF MOS'GARUTO. AND YOU?
EARTH.
BIRTH-PLACE?

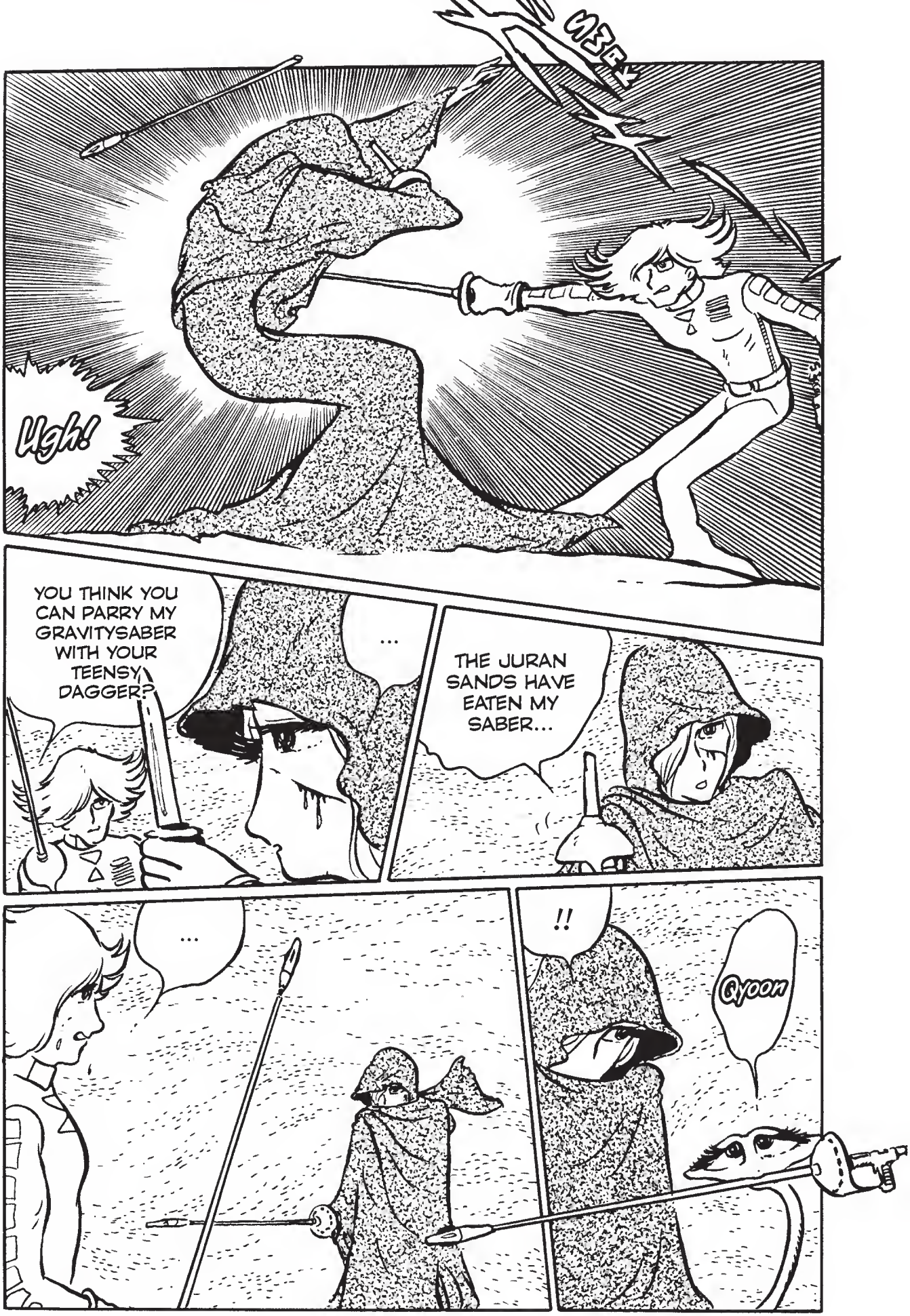

I FOLLOW MY DREAMS...
WHY DID YOU COME HERE?
MOS'GARUTO?
AHHHH... SO LIKE MYSELF, WHEN I WAS YOUNG. I LEFT BEHIND THE GREEN LANDS OF MOS'GARUTO.
WHEN I WAS YOUR AGE, I TOO DEPARTED FOR THE OCEAN OF STARS.
A PLEASURE PLANET, DRUNK ON THE WINE CALLED SCIENTIFIC CIVILIZATION. WHERE PEOPLE QUARREL AND FEUD—AND MY HOPES AND DREAMS DIED...
IT WAS MAGNIFICENT!! I WANDERED, FOUGHT... WAS WOUNDED. FELL IN LOVE.
AND?
MY LIFE WAS LIKE A DREAM. I CAN DIE WITH NO REGRETS.

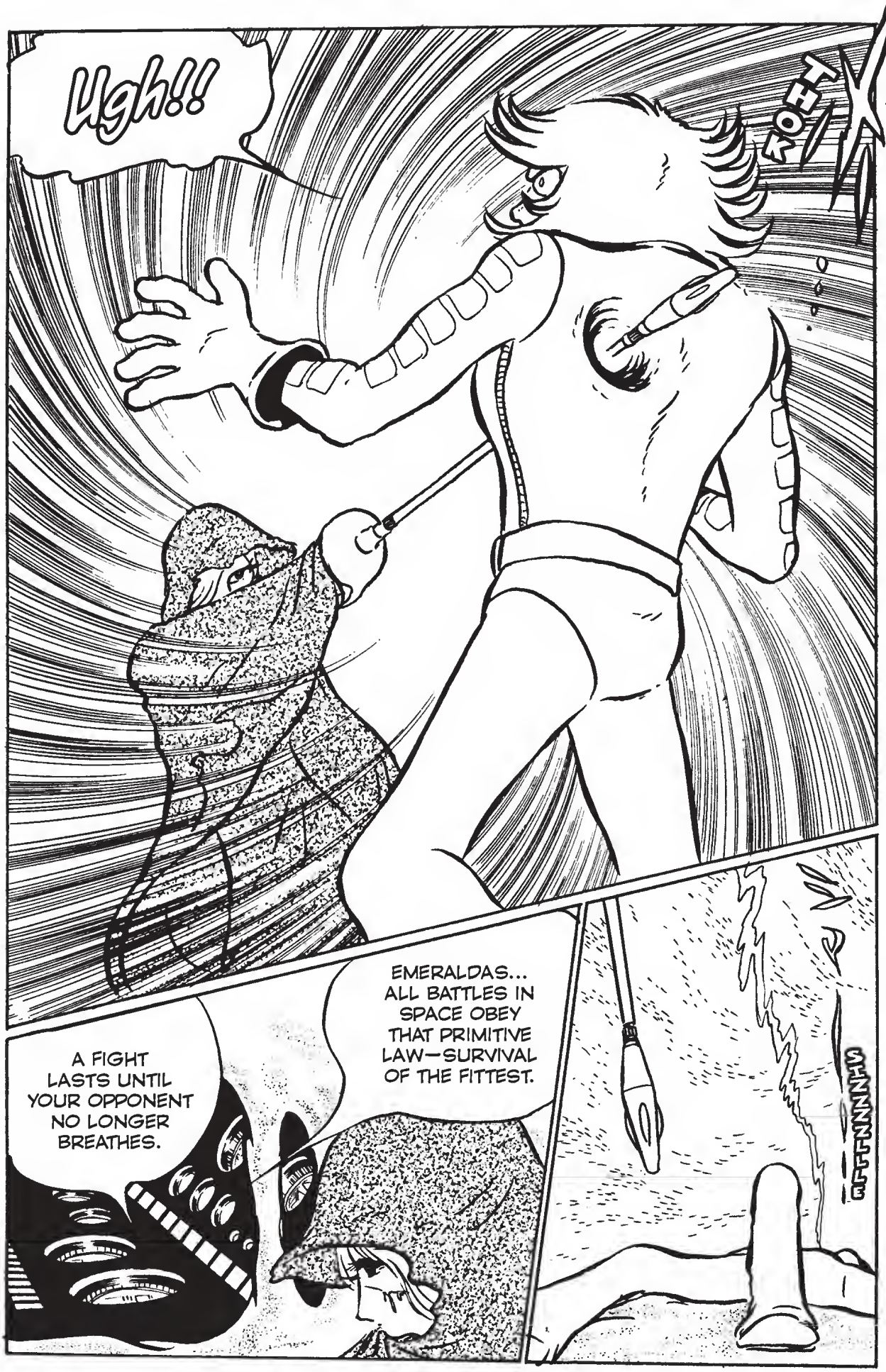

I GIVE YOU MY SHIP. AND DIE...
AND NOW... TO MEET ONE WHO IS SO VERY LIKE MY OLD SELF... I AM CONTENT, EMERALDAS.
YOUR SHIP?
Qyoon
WE SUFFERED TOGETHER. WEPT TOGETHER. MY BELOVED...
INDEED. SHE HAS BEEN MY COMPANION. SHE HAS FOUGHT BESIDE ME, AND BLED WITH ME...

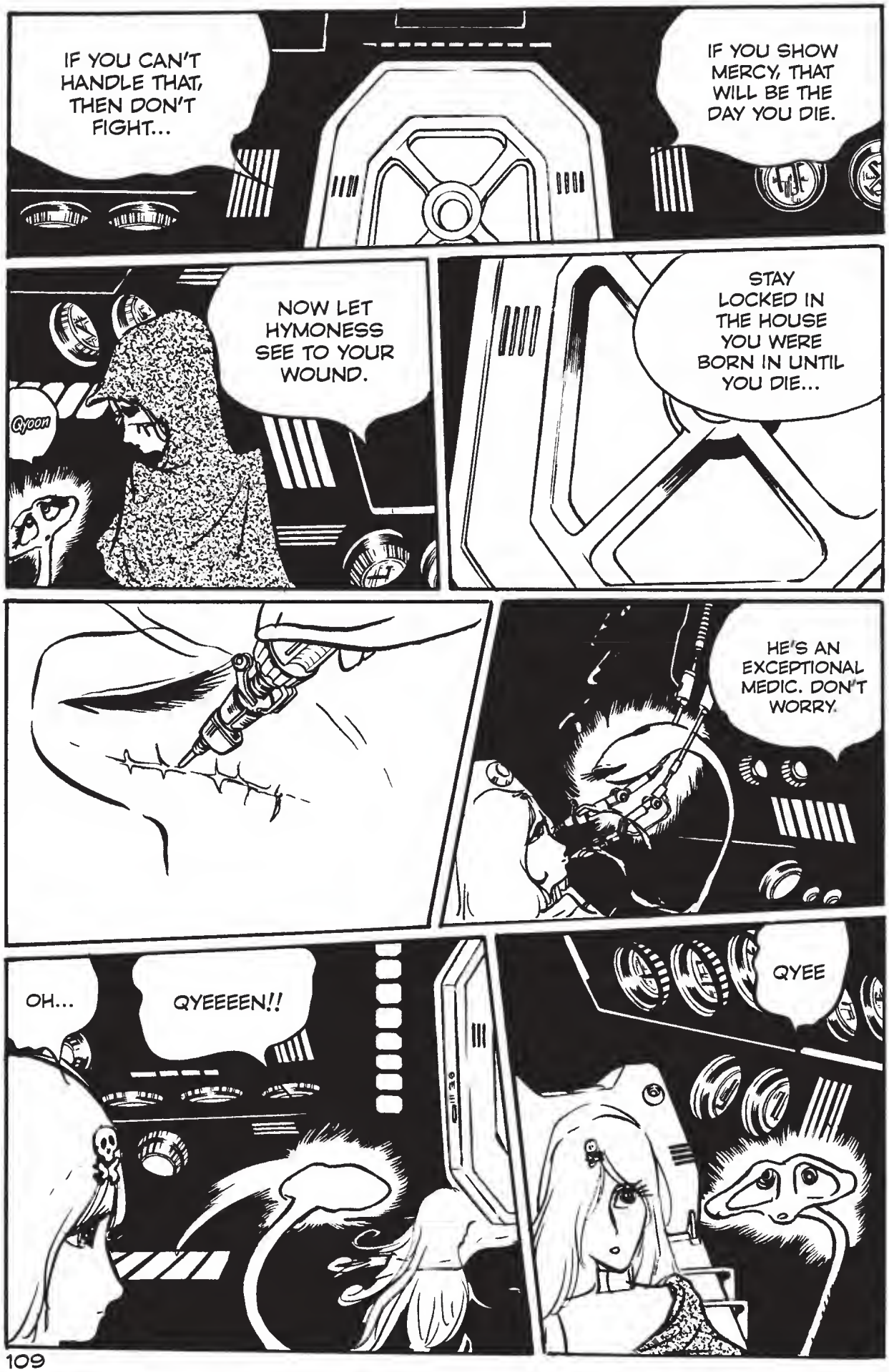

BUT NOW I AM AT PEACE. I CAN PASS INTO ETERNITY...
I COULD NOT BEAR TO DIE, AND LEAVE HER ALONE...
WHEN I DIE... BURY ME BENEATH THE JURAN SANDS... AND THEN SET FORTH.
...
THIS SHIP WILL TAKE YOU WHEREVER YOU WISH...
BUT WHERE... IS THIS SHIP?
!!
YOU ARE INSIDE HER NOW.
HAD ENOUGH YET?
!!

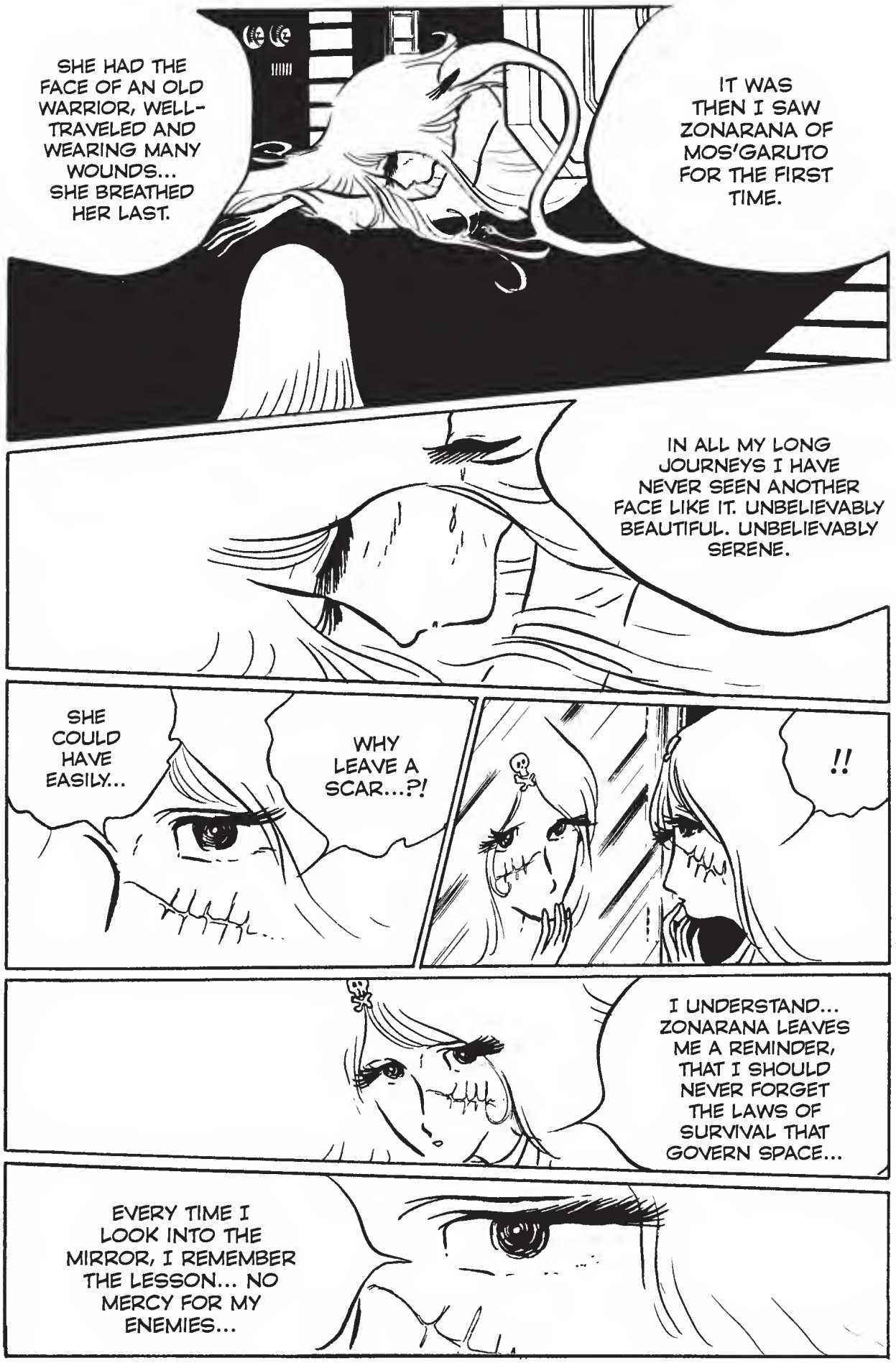

YOU READY TO BE MY SLAVE, EMERALDAS?!
LET ME HELP YOU ON YOUR WAY!
WELL THEN!
FEH.
I WOULD RATHER DISSIPATE INTO THE SANDS OF JURA THEN SERVE YOU.
!!
IF YOU CAN!
WANG

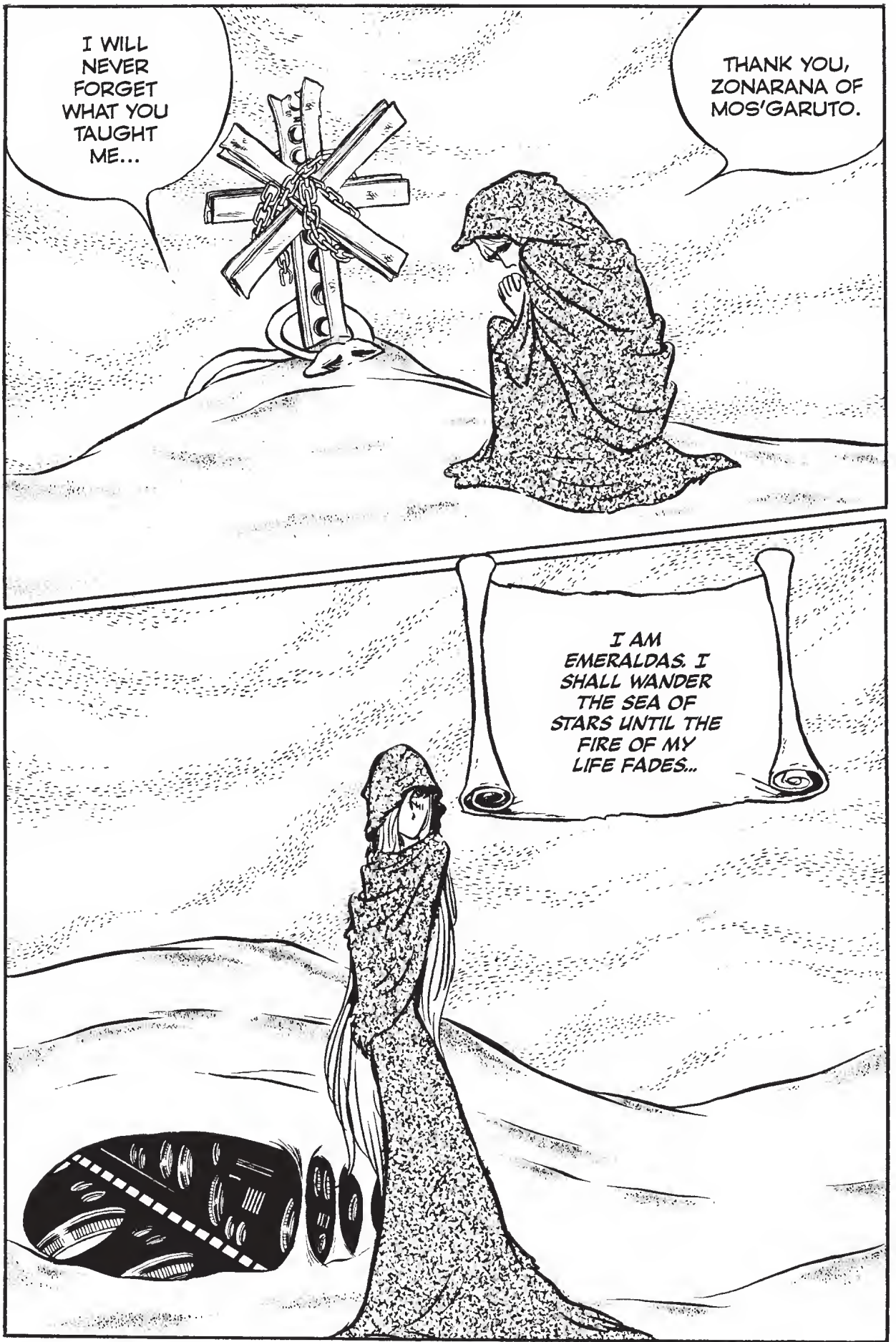
KA-TANG
...NOW DO YOU UNDER-STAND?
THEN GO BACK TO YOUR CITY!
...
AH...

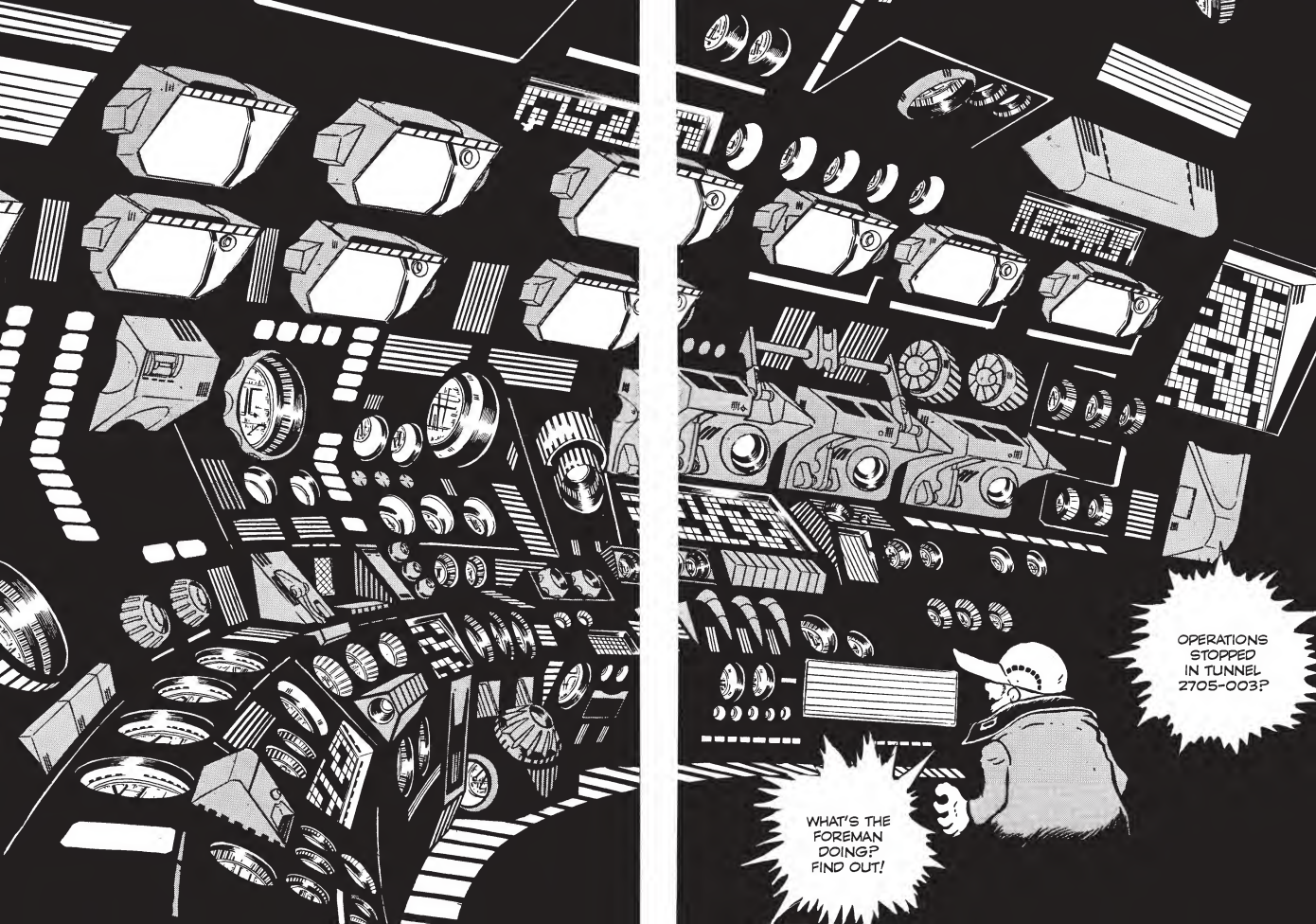

SHRK
Ugh!
YOU THINK YOU CAN PARRY MY GRAVITYSABER WITH YOUR TEENSY DAGGER?
...
THE JURAN SANDS HAVE EATEN MY SABER...
...
!!
Gyoon

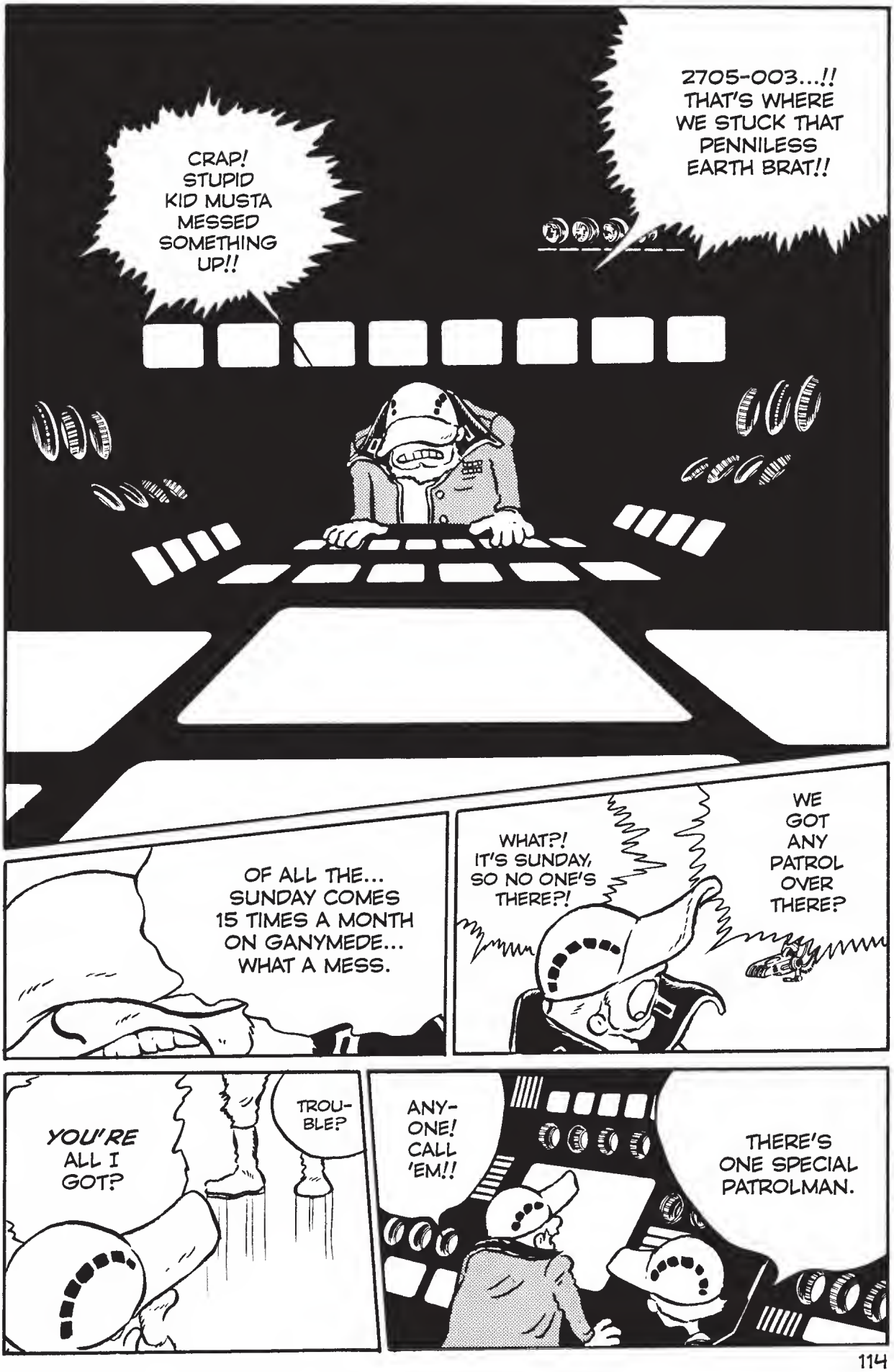

Ugh!!
THOK
EMERALDAS... ALL BATTLES IN SPACE OBEY THAT PRIMITIVE LAW—SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST.
A FIGHT LASTS UNTIL YOUR OPPONENT NO LONGER BREATHES.
SHNNTTG

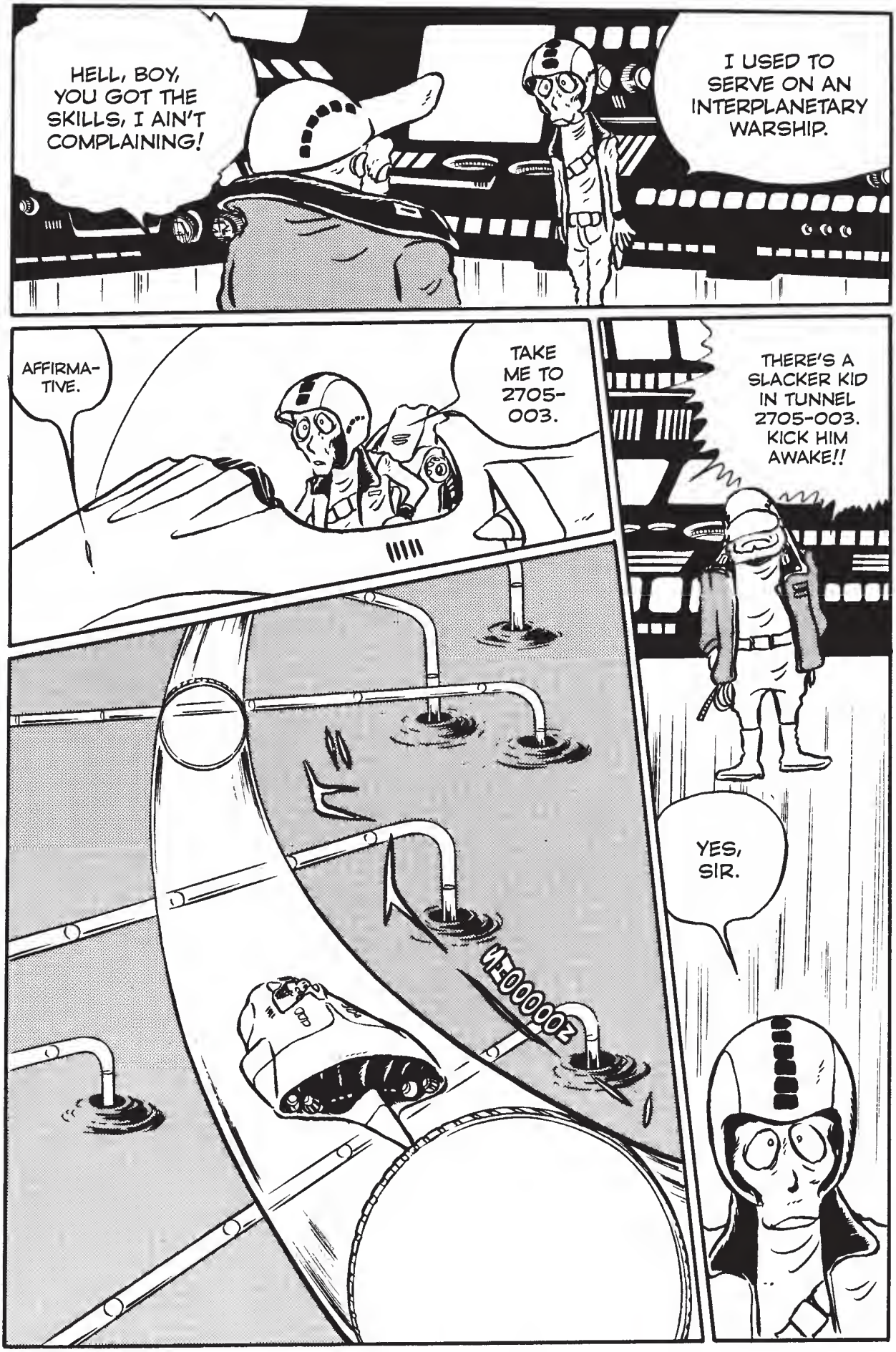

IF YOU CAN'T HANDLE THAT, THEN DON'T FIGHT...
IF YOU SHOW MERCY, THAT WILL BE THE DAY YOU DIE.
NOW LET HYMONESS SEE TO YOUR WOUND.
Qyoon
STAY LOCKED IN THE HOUSE YOU WERE BORN IN UNTIL YOU DIE...
HE'S AN EXCEPTIONAL MEDIC. DON'T WORRY.
OH...
QYEEEEN!!
QYEE

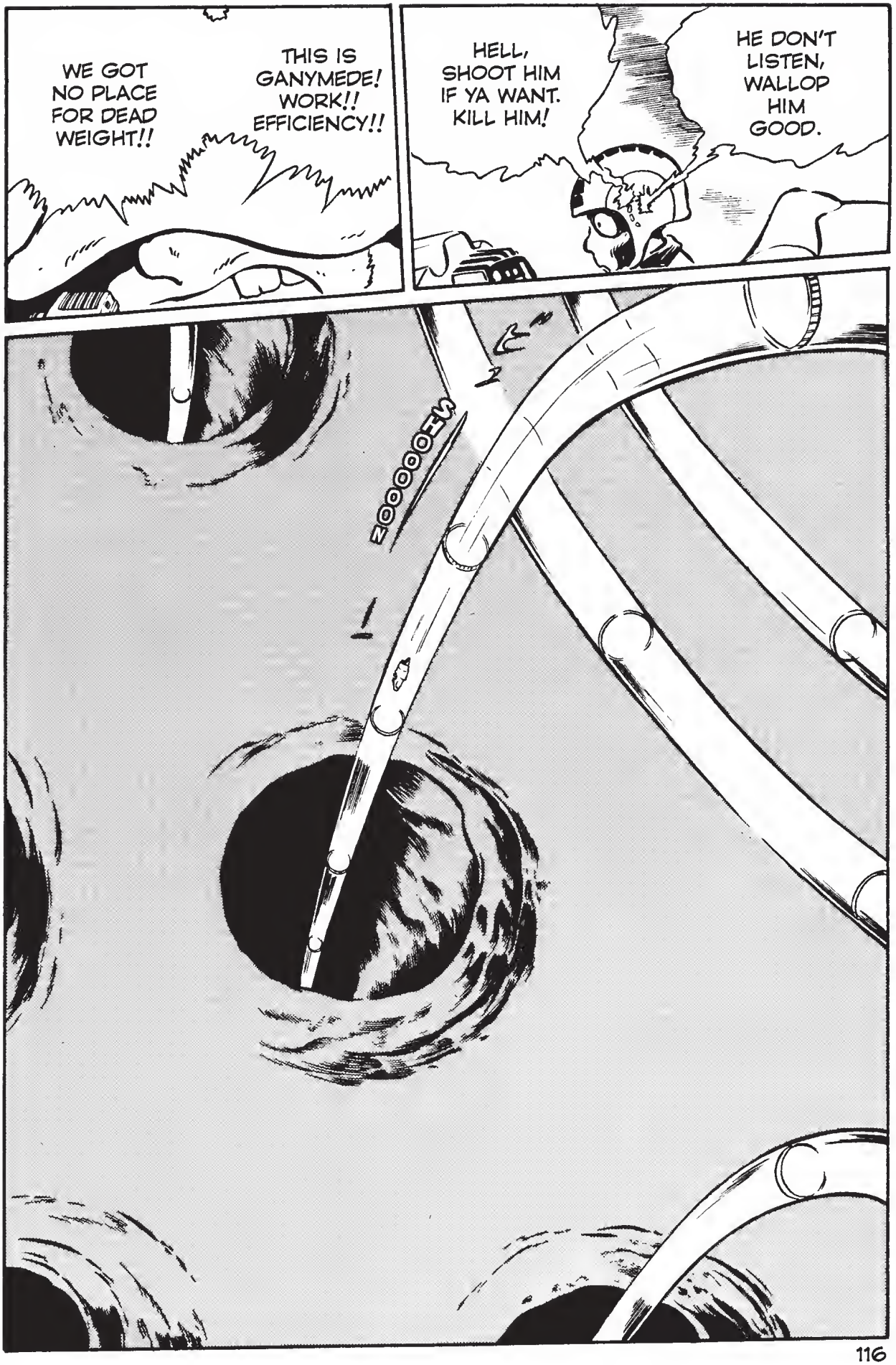

SHE HAD THE FACE OF AN OLD WARRIOR, WELL-TRAVELED AND WEARING MANY WOUNDS... SHE BREATHED HER LAST.
IT WAS THEN I SAW ZONARANA OF MOS'GARUTO FOR THE FIRST TIME.
IN ALL MY LONG JOURNEYS I HAVE NEVER SEEN ANOTHER FACE LIKE IT. UNBELIEVABLY BEAUTIFUL. UNBELIEVABLY SERENE.
SHE COULD HAVE EASILY...
WHY LEAVE A SCAR...?!
!!
I UNDERSTAND... ZONARANA LEAVES ME A REMINDER, THAT I SHOULD NEVER FORGET THE LAWS OF SURVIVAL THAT GOVERN SPACE...
EVERY TIME I LOOK INTO THE MIRROR, I REMEMBER THE LESSON... NO MERCY FOR MY ENEMIES...

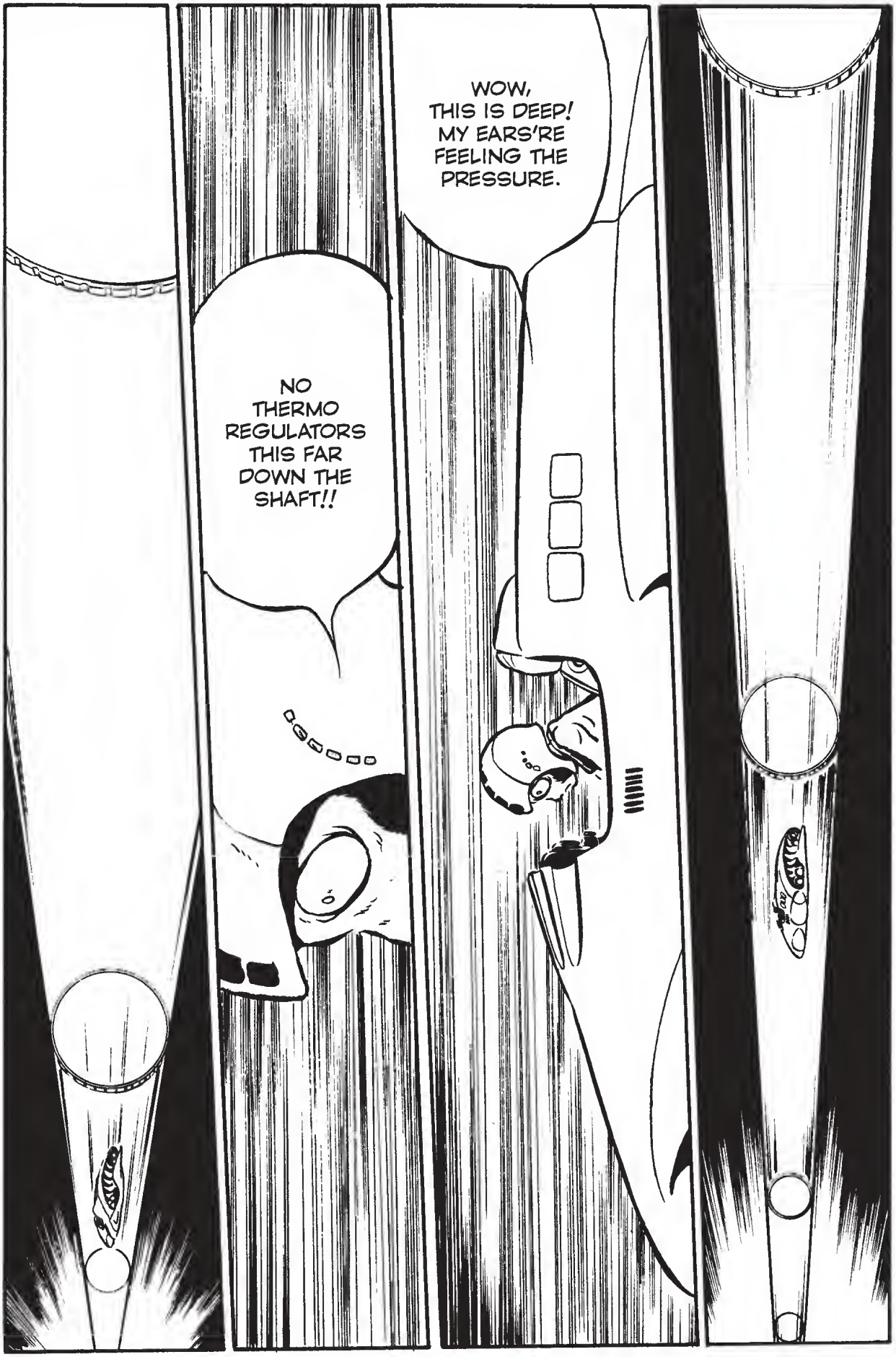

I WILL NEVER FORGET WHAT YOU TAUGHT ME...
THANK YOU, ZONARANA OF MOS'GARUTO.
I AM EMERALDAS. I SHALL WANDER THE SEA OF STARS UNTIL THE FIRE OF MY LIFE FADES...

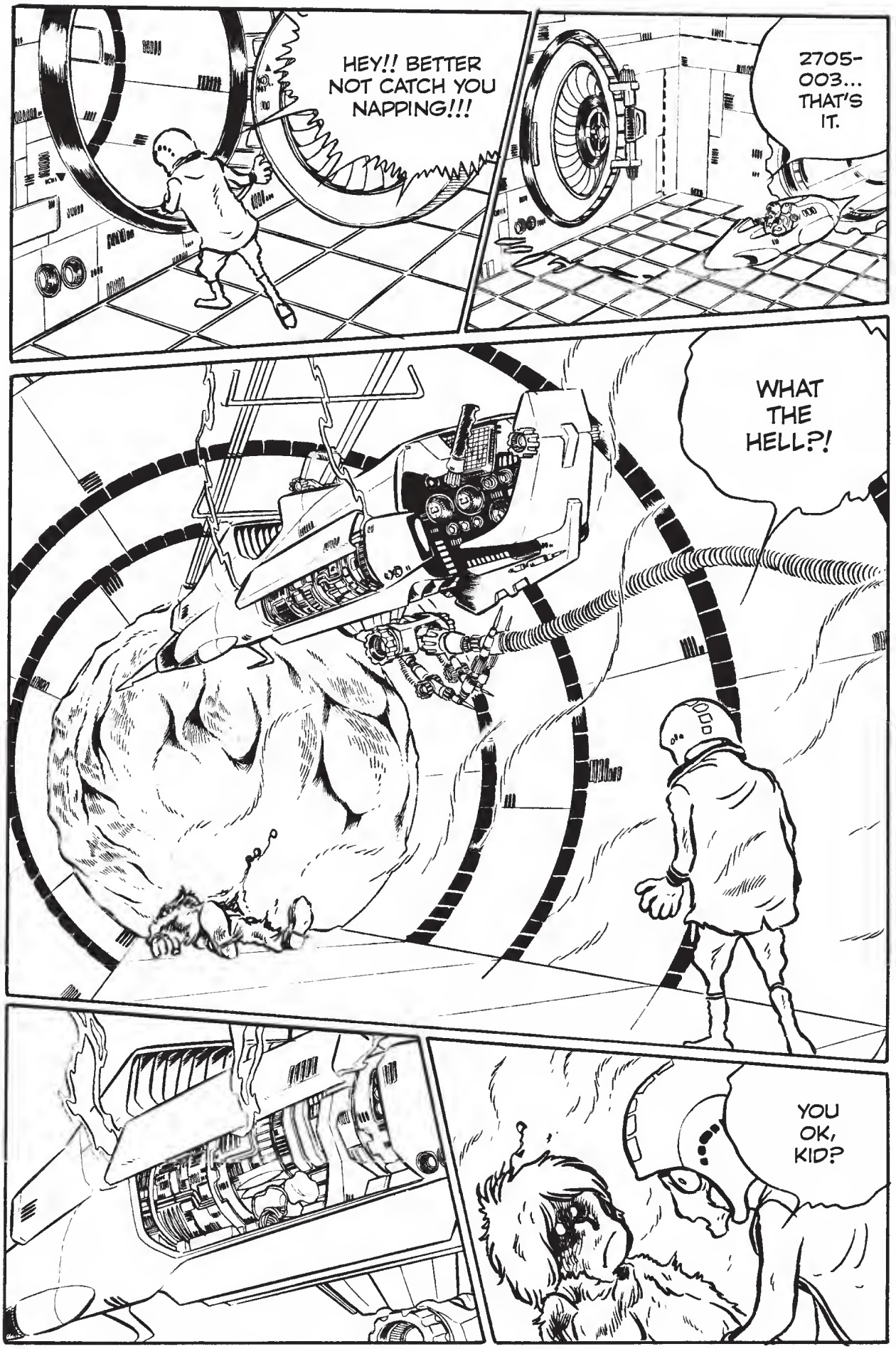

OPERATIONS STOPPED IN TUNNEL 2705-003?
WHAT'S THE FOREMAN DOING? FIND OUT!

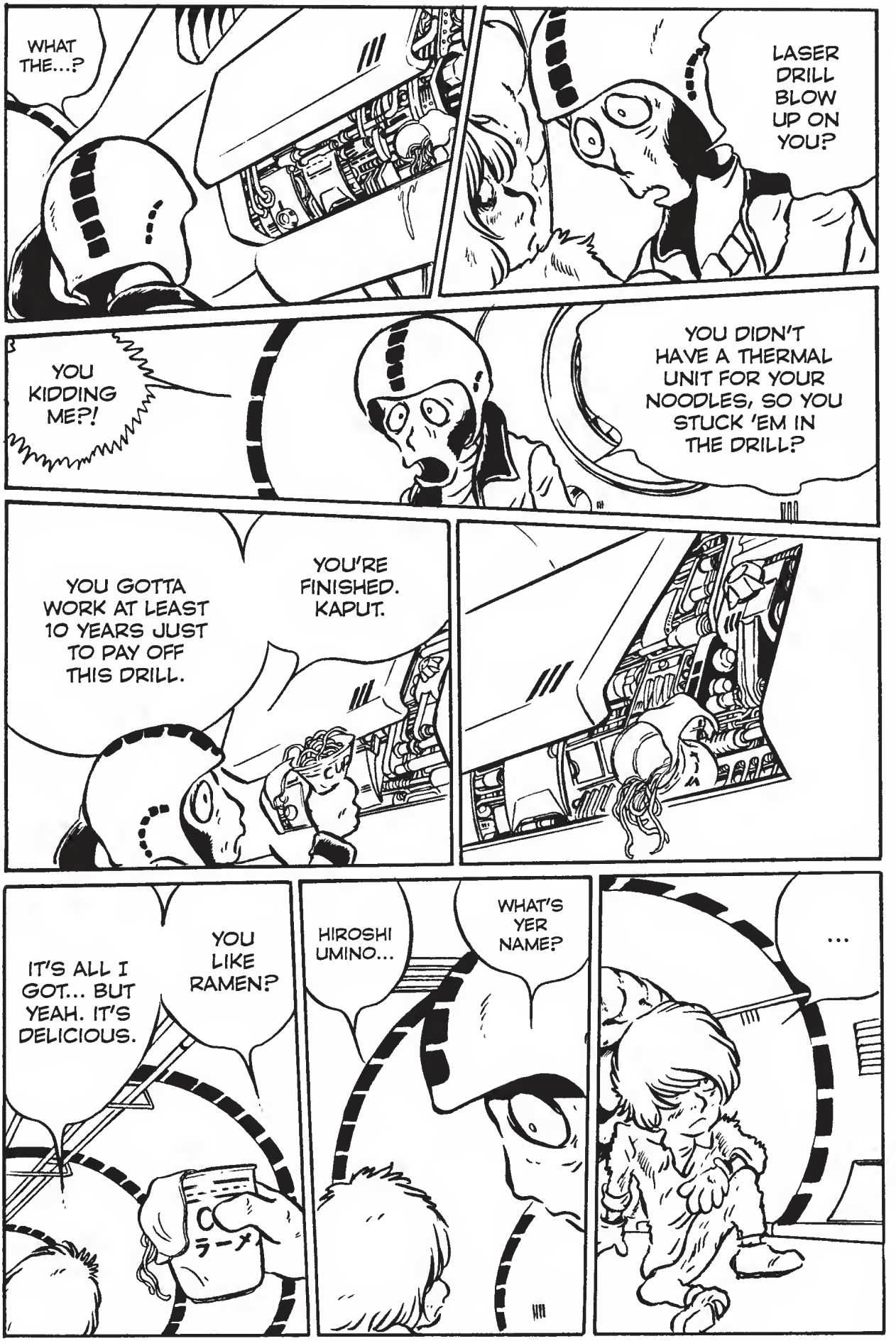

CRAP! STUPID KID MUSTA MESSED SOMETHING UP!!
2705-003...!! THAT'S WHERE WE STUCK THAT PENNILESS EARTH BRAT!!
OF ALL THE... SUNDAY COMES 15 TIMES A MONTH ON GANYMEDE... WHAT A MESS.
WHAT?! IT'S SUNDAY, SO NO ONE'S THERE?!
WE GOT ANY PATROL OVER THERE?
YOU'RE ALL I GOT?
TROU-BLE?
ANY-ONE! CALL 'EM!!
THERE'S ONE SPECIAL PATROLMAN.

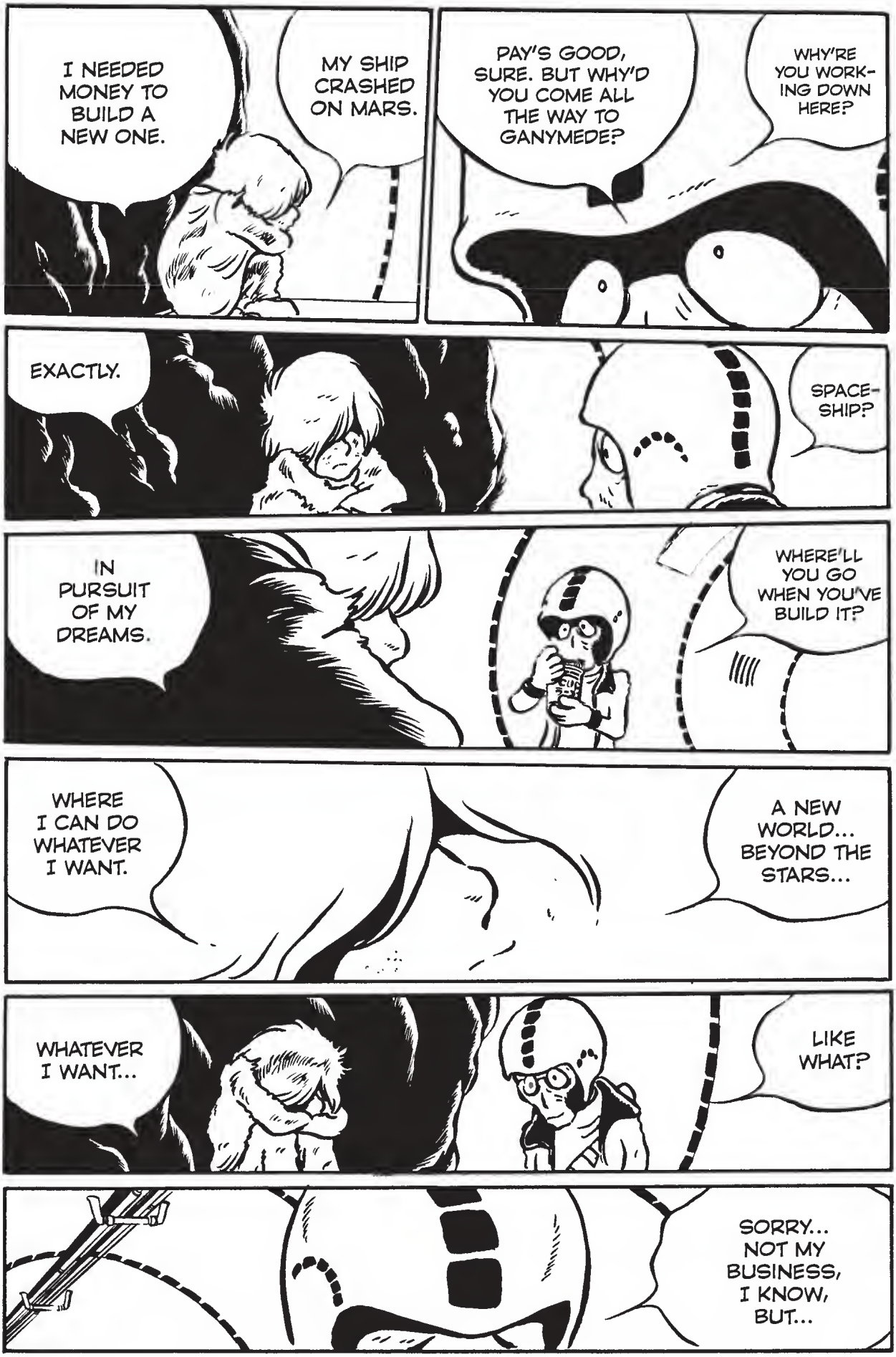

HELL, BOY, YOU GOT THE SKILLS, I AIN'T COMPLAINING!
I USED TO SERVE ON AN INTERPLANETARY WARSHIP.
AFFIRMA-TIVE.
TAKE ME TO 2705-003.
THERE'S A SLACKER KID IN TUNNEL 2705-003. KICK HIM AWAKE!!
YES, SIR.
H-OOOOOZ

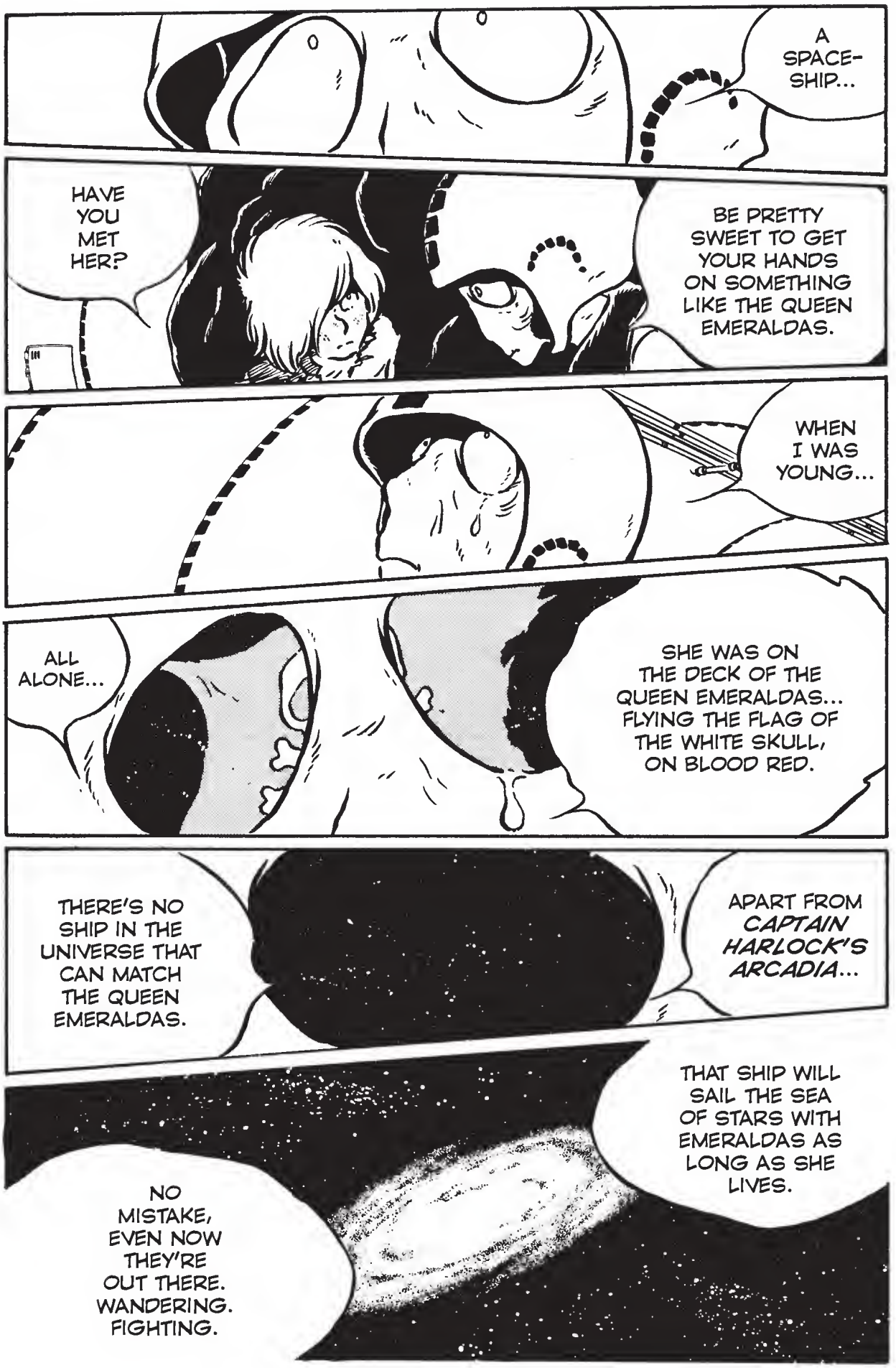

WE GOT NO PLACE FOR DEAD WEIGHT!!
THIS IS GANYMEDE! WORK!! EFFICIENCY!!
HELL, SHOOT HIM IF YA WANT. KILL HIM!
HE DON'T LISTEN, WALLOP HIM GOOD.
ZOOOOOM

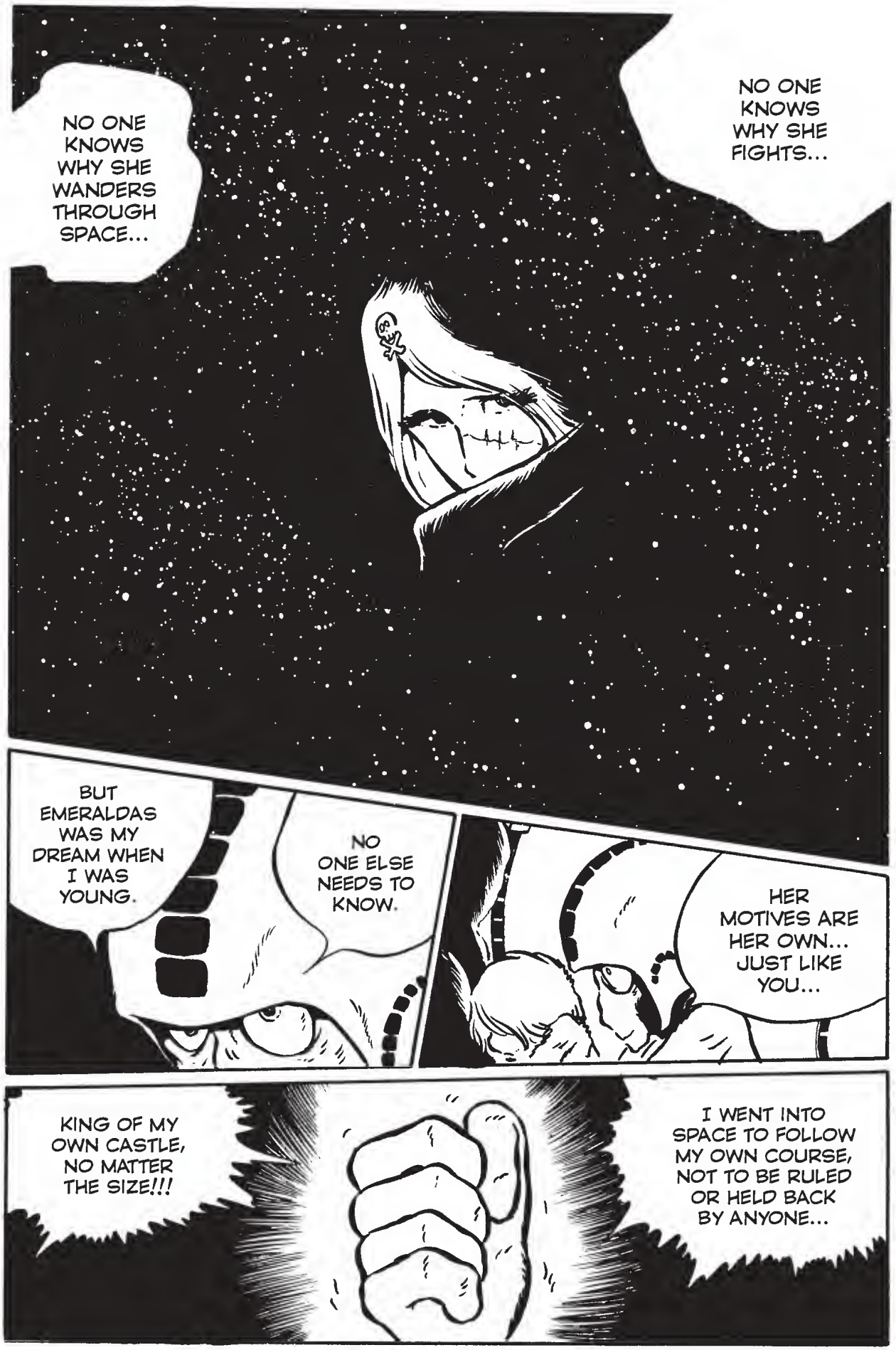

WOW, THIS IS DEEP! MY EARS'RE FEELING THE PRESSURE.
NO THERMO REGULATORS THIS FAR DOWN THE SHAFT!!

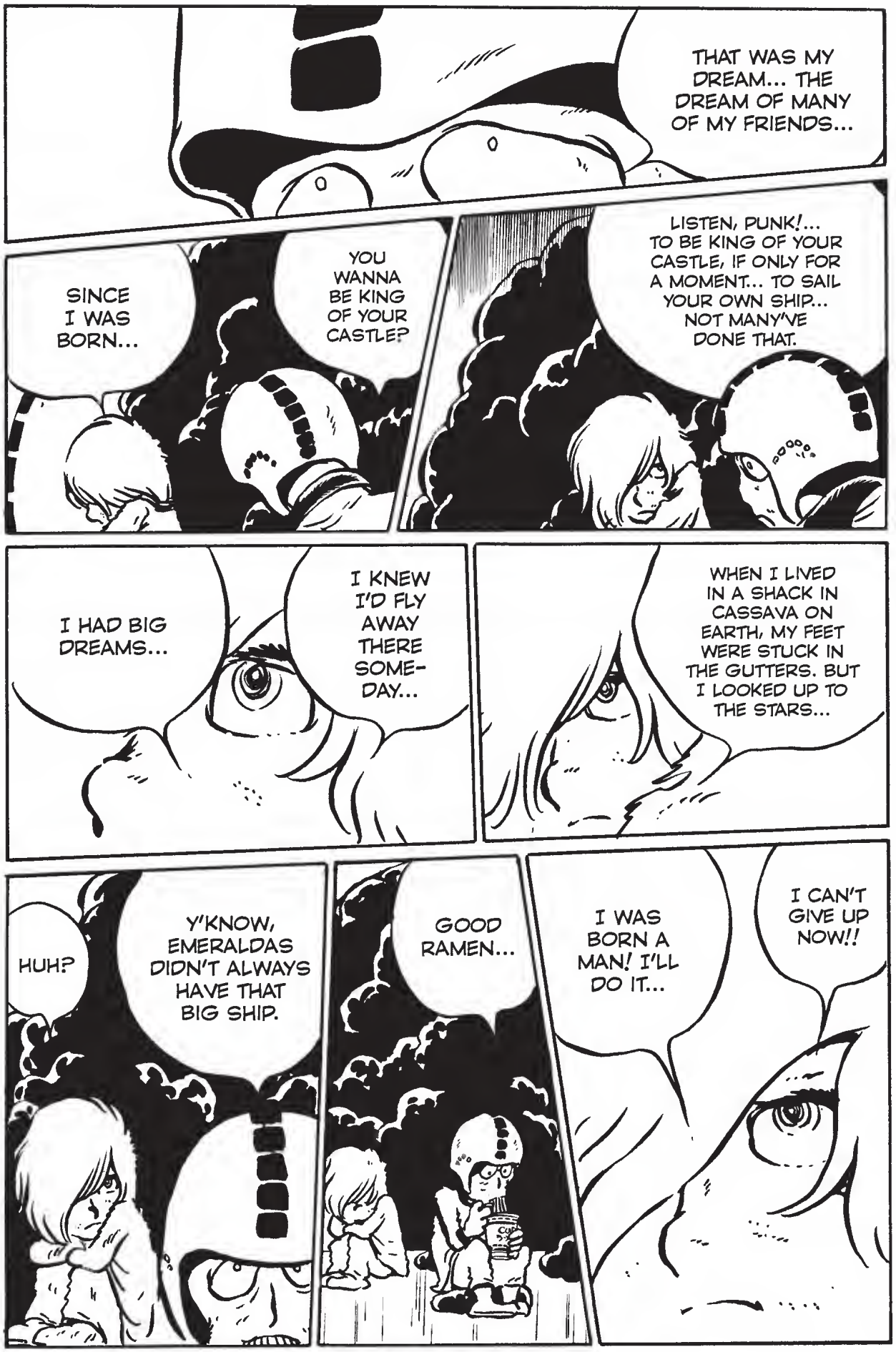

HEY!! BETTER NOT CATCH YOU NAPPING!!!
2705-003... THAT'S IT.
WHAT THE HELL?!
YOU OK, KID?

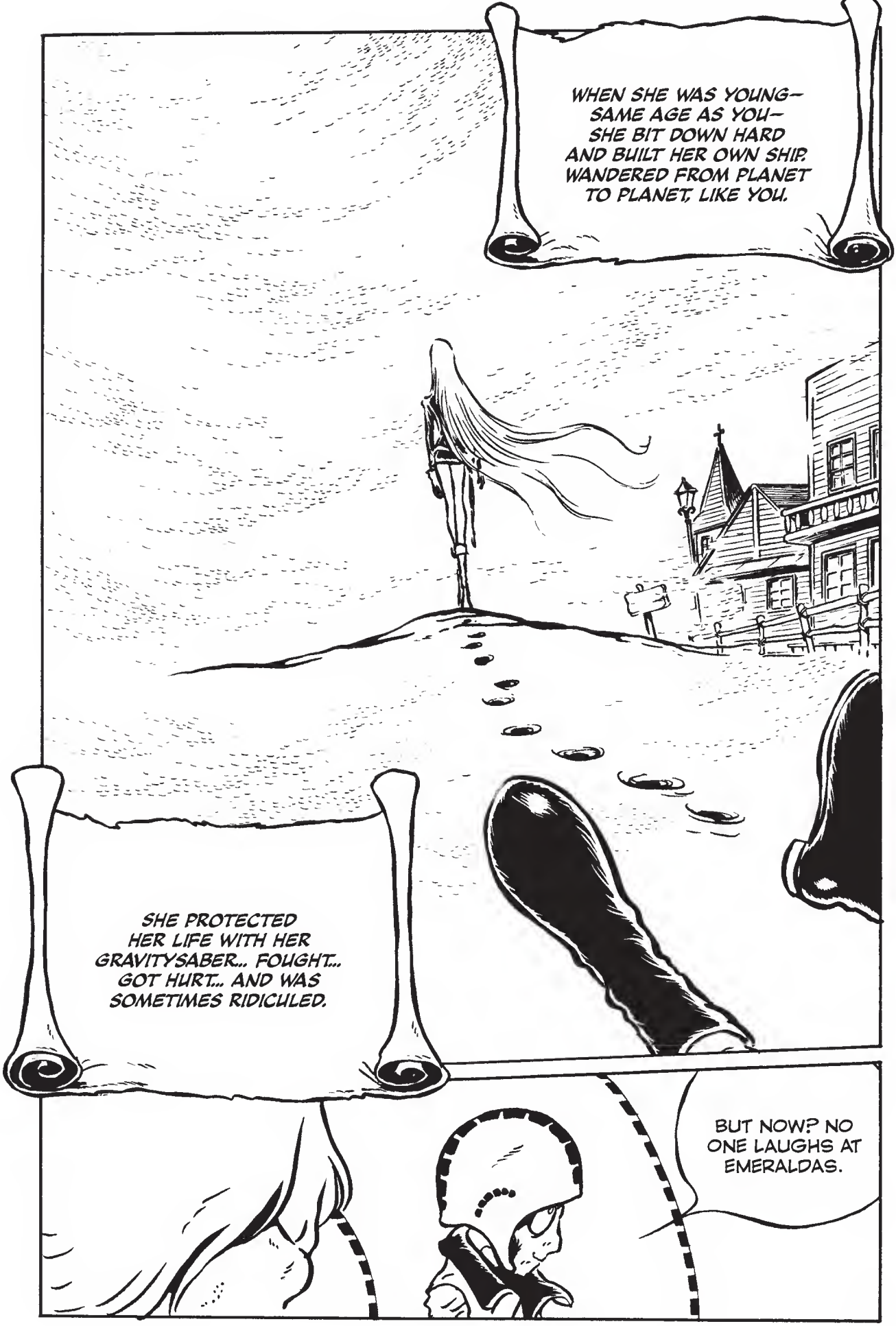

WHAT THE...?
LASER DRILL BLOW UP ON YOU?
YOU KIDDING ME?!
YOU DIDN'T HAVE A THERMAL UNIT FOR YOUR NOODLES, SO YOU STUCK 'EM IN THE DRILL?
YOU GOTTA WORK AT LEAST 10 YEARS JUST TO PAY OFF THIS DRILL.
YOU'RE FINISHED. KAPUT.
IT'S ALL I GOT... BUT YEAH. IT'S DELICIOUS.
YOU LIKE RAMEN?
ラーメ
HIROSHI UMINO...
WHAT'S YER NAME?
...

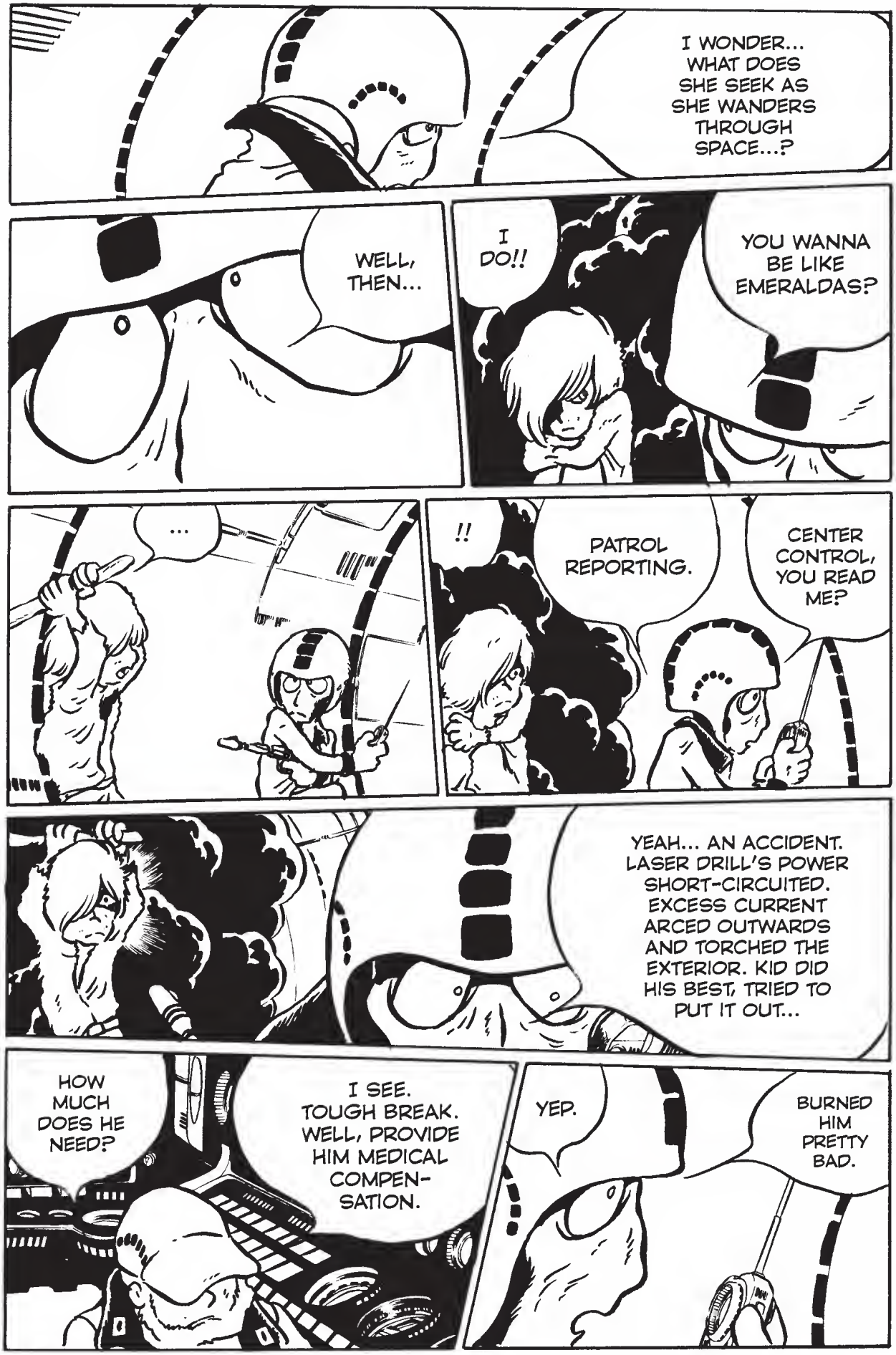

I NEEDED MONEY TO BUILD A NEW ONE.
MY SHIP CRASHED ON MARS.
PAY'S GOOD, SURE. BUT WHY'D YOU COME ALL THE WAY TO GANYMEDE?
WHY'RE YOU WORKING DOWN HERE?
EXACTLY.
SPACESHIP?
IN PURSUIT OF MY DREAMS.
WHERE'LL YOU GO WHEN YOU'VE BUILD IT?
WHERE I CAN DO WHATEVER I WANT.
A NEW WORLD... BEYOND THE STARS...
WHATEVER I WANT...
LIKE WHAT?
SORRY... NOT MY BUSINESS, I KNOW, BUT...

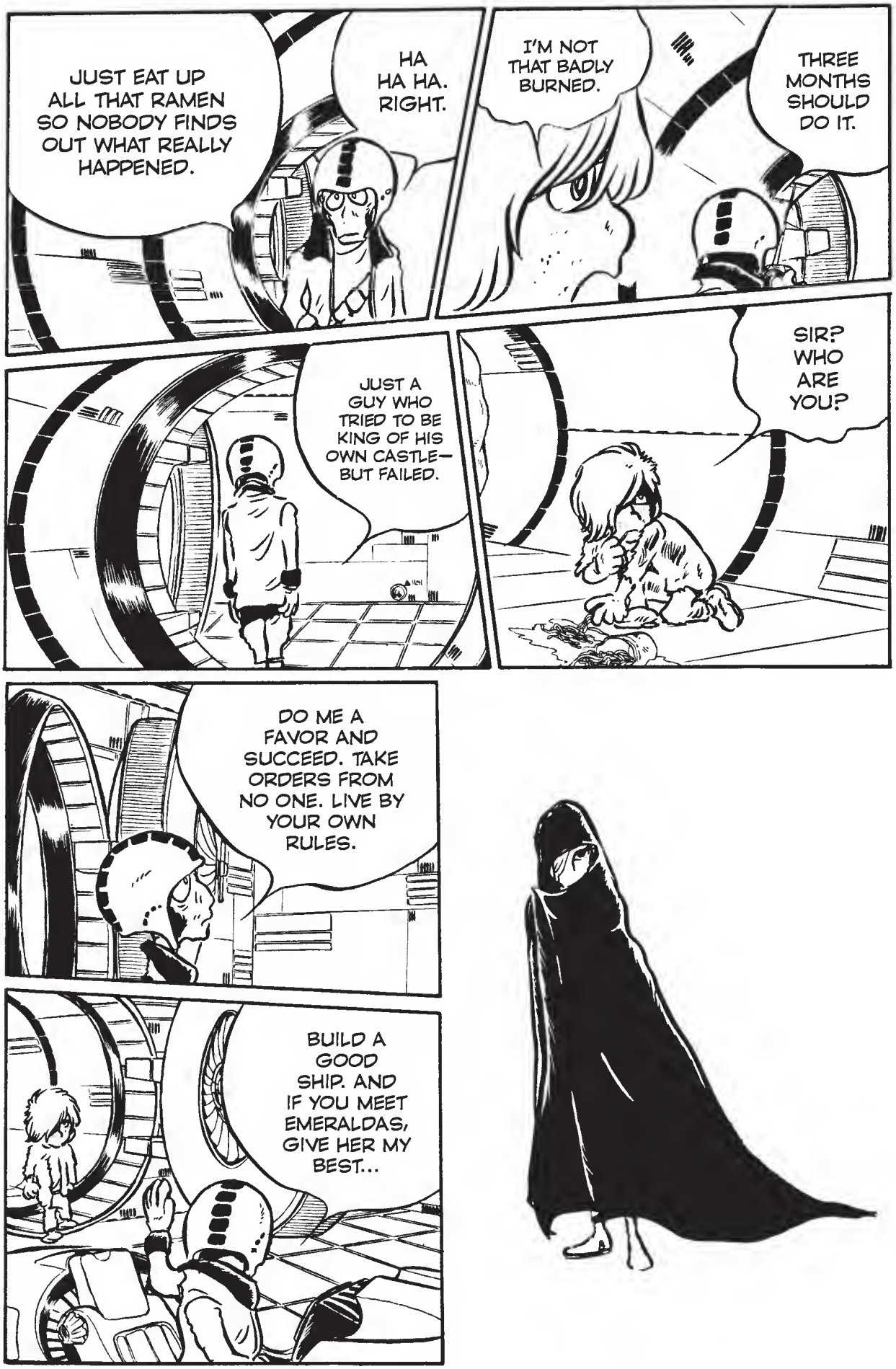

A SPACE-SHIP...
HAVE YOU MET HER?
BE PRETTY SWEET TO GET YOUR HANDS ON SOMETHING LIKE THE QUEEN EMERALDAS.
WHEN I WAS YOUNG...
ALL ALONE...
SHE WAS ON THE DECK OF THE QUEEN EMERALDAS... FLYING THE FLAG OF THE WHITE SKULL, ON BLOOD RED.
THERE'S NO SHIP IN THE UNIVERSE THAT CAN MATCH THE QUEEN EMERALDAS.
APART FROM *CAPTAIN HARLOCK'S ARCADIA*...
THAT SHIP WILL SAIL THE SEA OF STARS WITH EMERALDAS AS LONG AS SHE LIVES.
NO MISTAKE, EVEN NOW THEY'RE OUT THERE. WANDERING. FIGHTING.

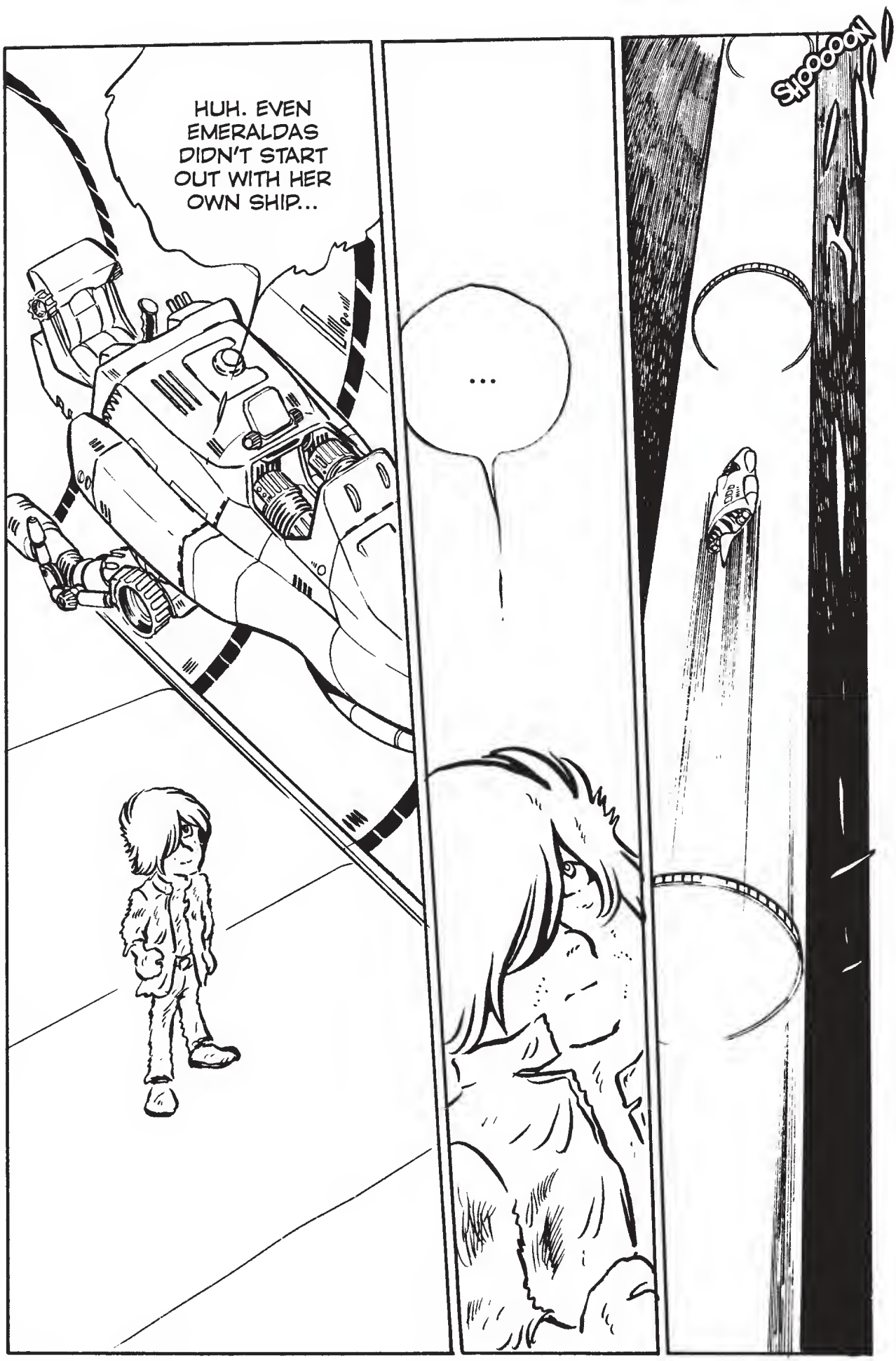

NO ONE KNOWS WHY SHE WANDERS THROUGH SPACE...
NO ONE KNOWS WHY SHE FIGHTS...
BUT EMERALDAS WAS MY DREAM WHEN I WAS YOUNG.
NO ONE ELSE NEEDS TO KNOW.
HER MOTIVES ARE HER OWN... JUST LIKE YOU...
KING OF MY OWN CASTLE, NO MATTER THE SIZE!!!
I WENT INTO SPACE TO FOLLOW MY OWN COURSE, NOT TO BE RULED OR HELD BACK BY ANYONE...

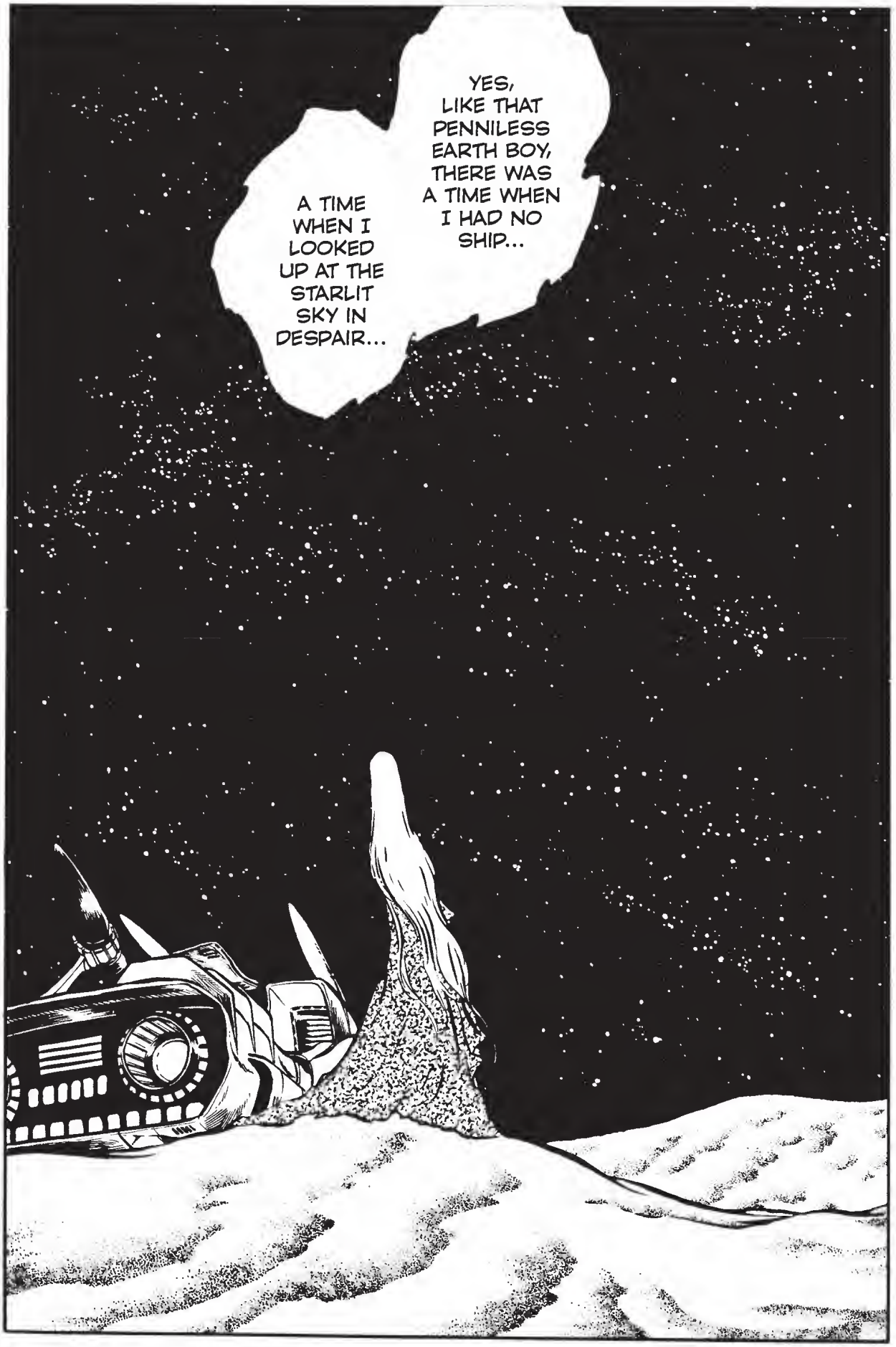

THAT WAS MY DREAM... THE DREAM OF MANY OF MY FRIENDS...
SINCE I WAS BORN...
YOU WANNA BE KING OF YOUR CASTLE?
LISTEN, PUNK!... TO BE KING OF YOUR CASTLE, IF ONLY FOR A MOMENT... TO SAIL YOUR OWN SHIP... NOT MANY'VE DONE THAT.
I HAD BIG DREAMS...
I KNEW I'D FLY AWAY THERE SOME-DAY...
WHEN I LIVED IN A SHACK IN CASSAVA ON EARTH, MY FEET WERE STUCK IN THE GUTTERS. BUT I LOOKED UP TO THE STARS...
HUH?
Y'KNOW, EMERALDAS DIDN'T ALWAYS HAVE THAT BIG SHIP.
GOOD RAMEN...
I WAS BORN A MAN! I'LL DO IT...
I CAN'T GIVE UP NOW!!

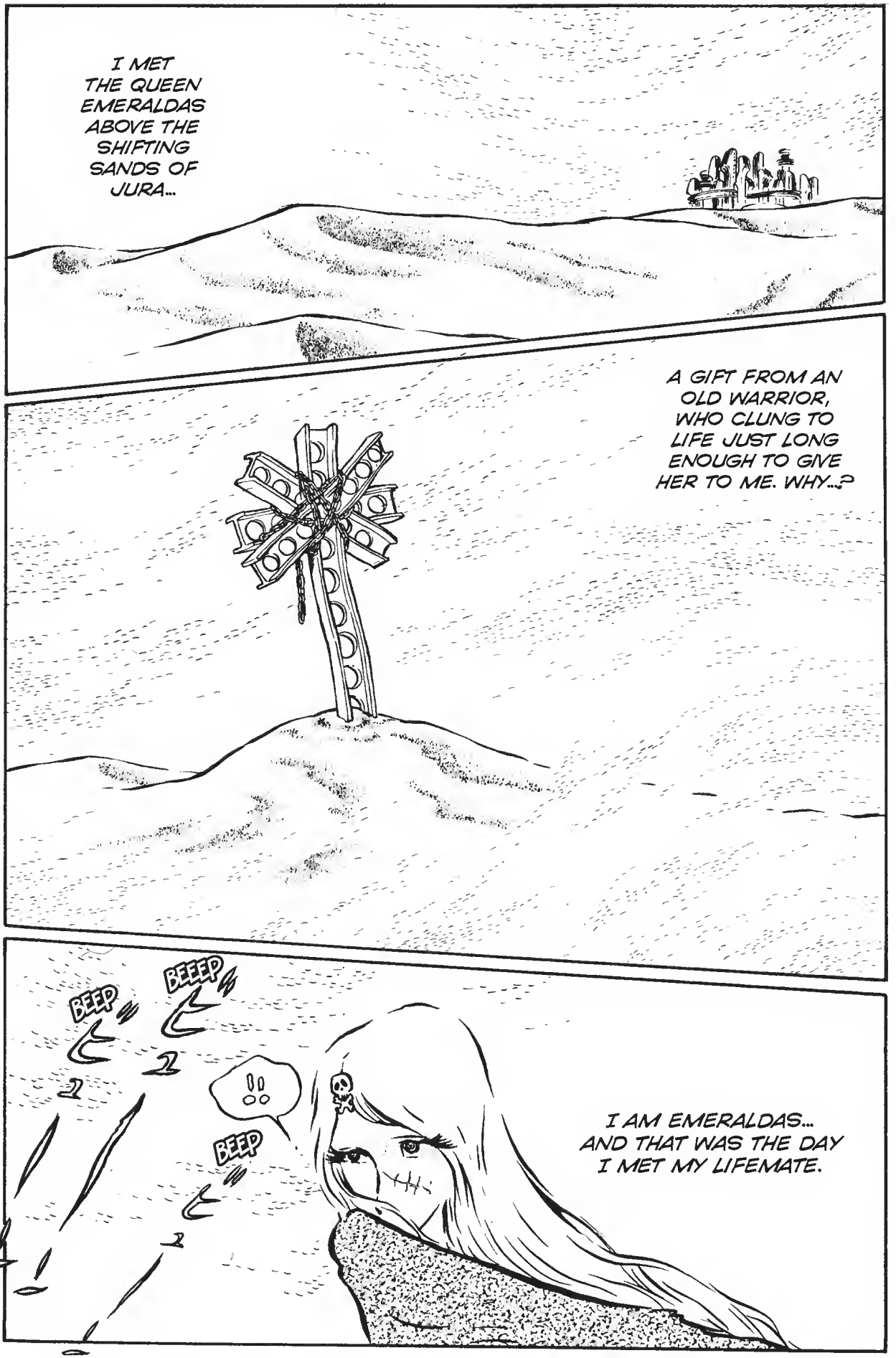

WHEN SHE WAS YOUNG— SAME AGE AS YOU— SHE BIT DOWN HARD AND BUILT HER OWN SHIP. WANDERED FROM PLANET TO PLANET, LIKE YOU.
SHE PROTECTED HER LIFE WITH HER GRAVITYSABER... FOUGHT... GOT HURT... AND WAS SOMETIMES RIDICULED.
BUT NOW? NO ONE LAUGHS AT EMERALDAS.

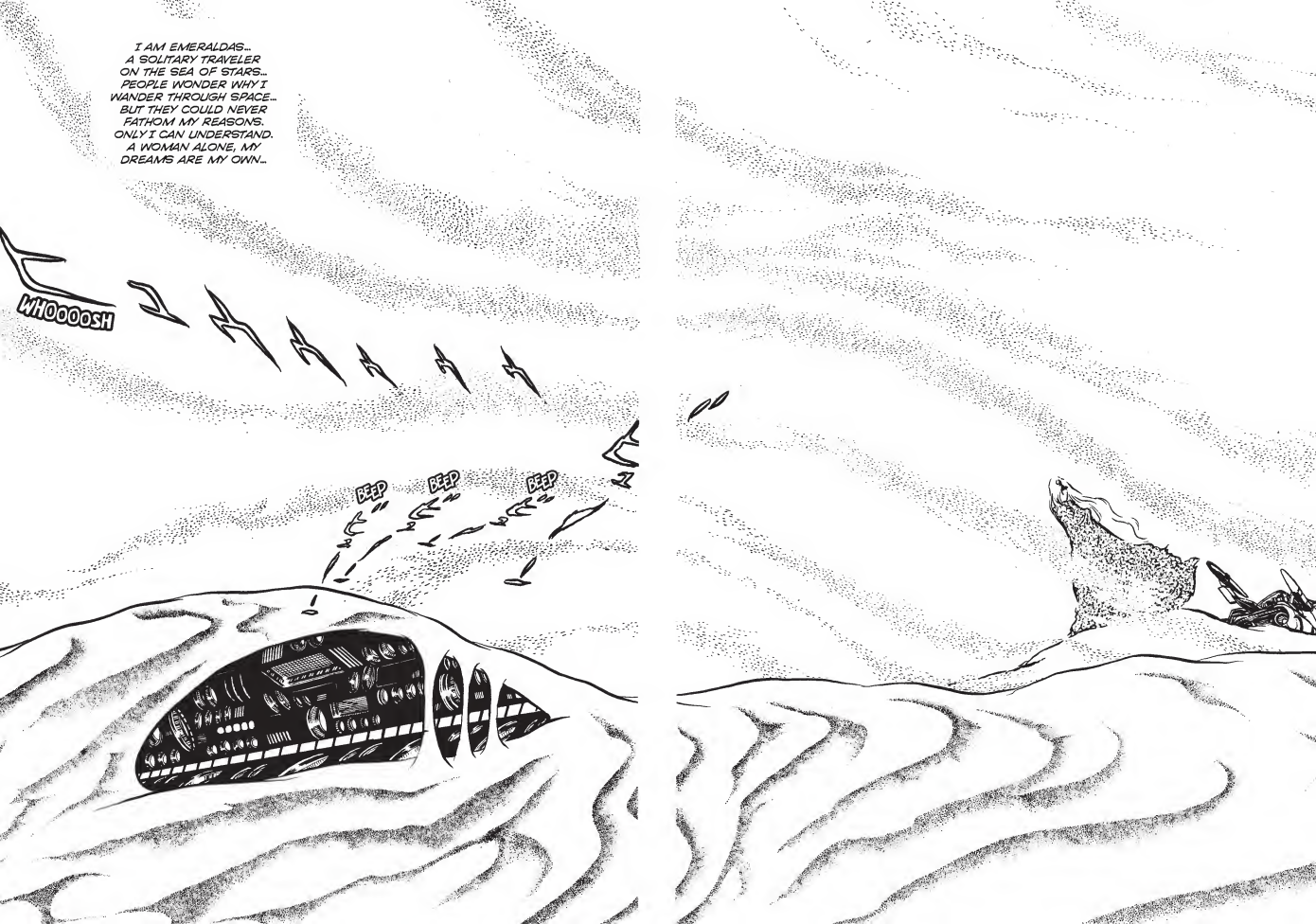

I WONDER... WHAT DOES SHE SEEK AS SHE WANDERS THROUGH SPACE...?
WELL, THEN...
I DO!!
YOU WANNA BE LIKE EMERALDAS?
...
!!
PATROL REPORTING.
CENTER CONTROL, YOU READ ME?
YEAH... AN ACCIDENT. LASER DRILL'S POWER SHORT-CIRCUITED. EXCESS CURRENT ARCED OUTWARDS AND TORCHED THE EXTERIOR. KID DID HIS BEST, TRIED TO PUT IT OUT...
HOW MUCH DOES HE NEED?
I SEE. TOUGH BREAK. WELL, PROVIDE HIM MEDICAL COMPEN-SATION.
YEP.
BURNED HIM PRETTY BAD.


JUST EAT UP ALL THAT RAMEN SO NOBODY FINDS OUT WHAT REALLY HAPPENED.
HA HA HA. RIGHT.
I'M NOT THAT BADLY BURNED.
THREE MONTHS SHOULD DO IT.
JUST A GUY WHO TRIED TO BE KING OF HIS OWN CASTLE— BUT FAILED.
SIR? WHO ARE YOU?
DO ME A FAVOR AND SUCCEED. TAKE ORDERS FROM NO ONE. LIVE BY YOUR OWN RULES.
BUILD A GOOD SHIP. AND IF YOU MEET EMERALDAS, GIVE HER MY BEST...

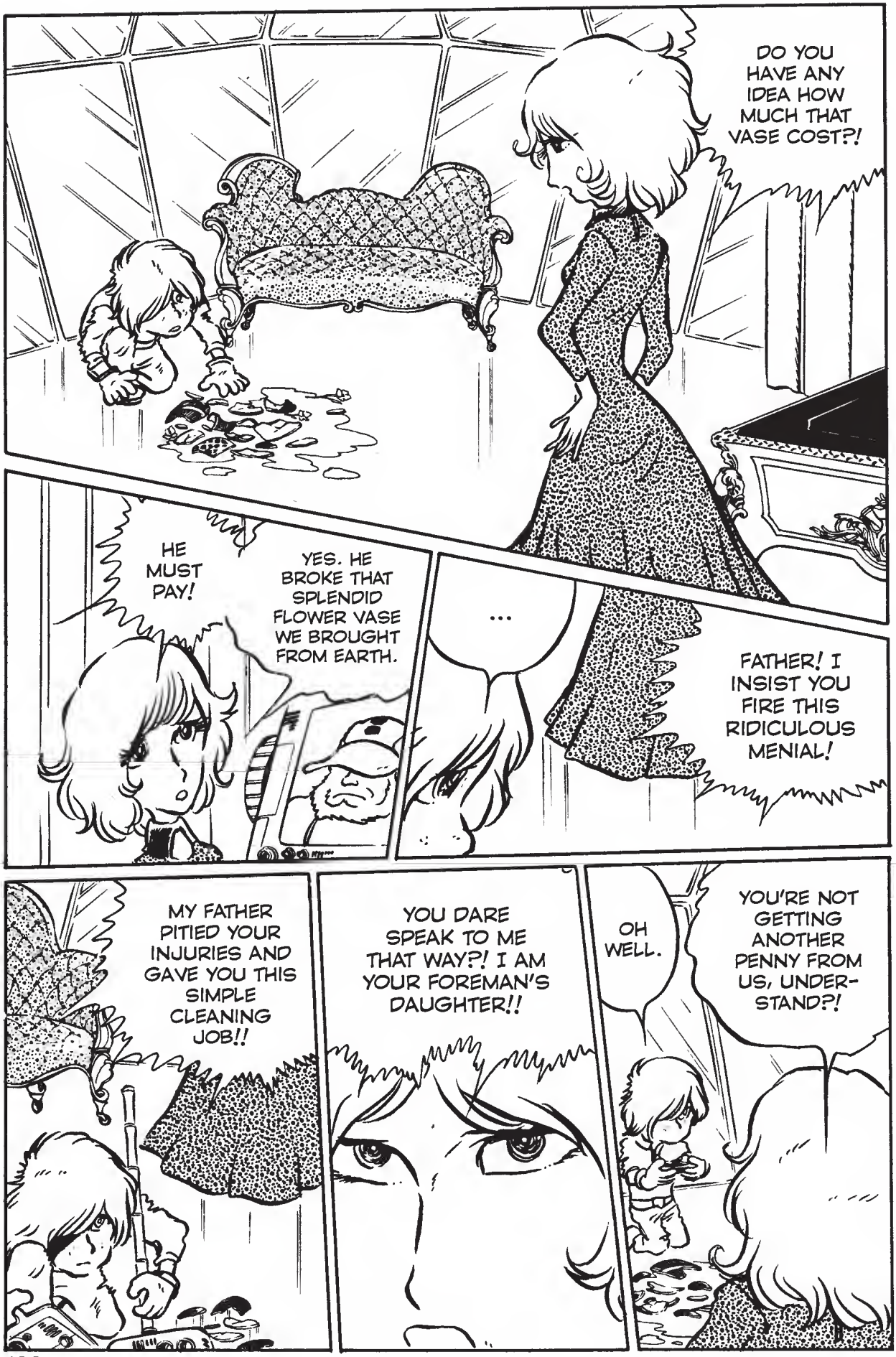

HUH. EVEN EMERALDAS DIDN'T START OUT WITH HER OWN SHIP...
...
SHOOOOM

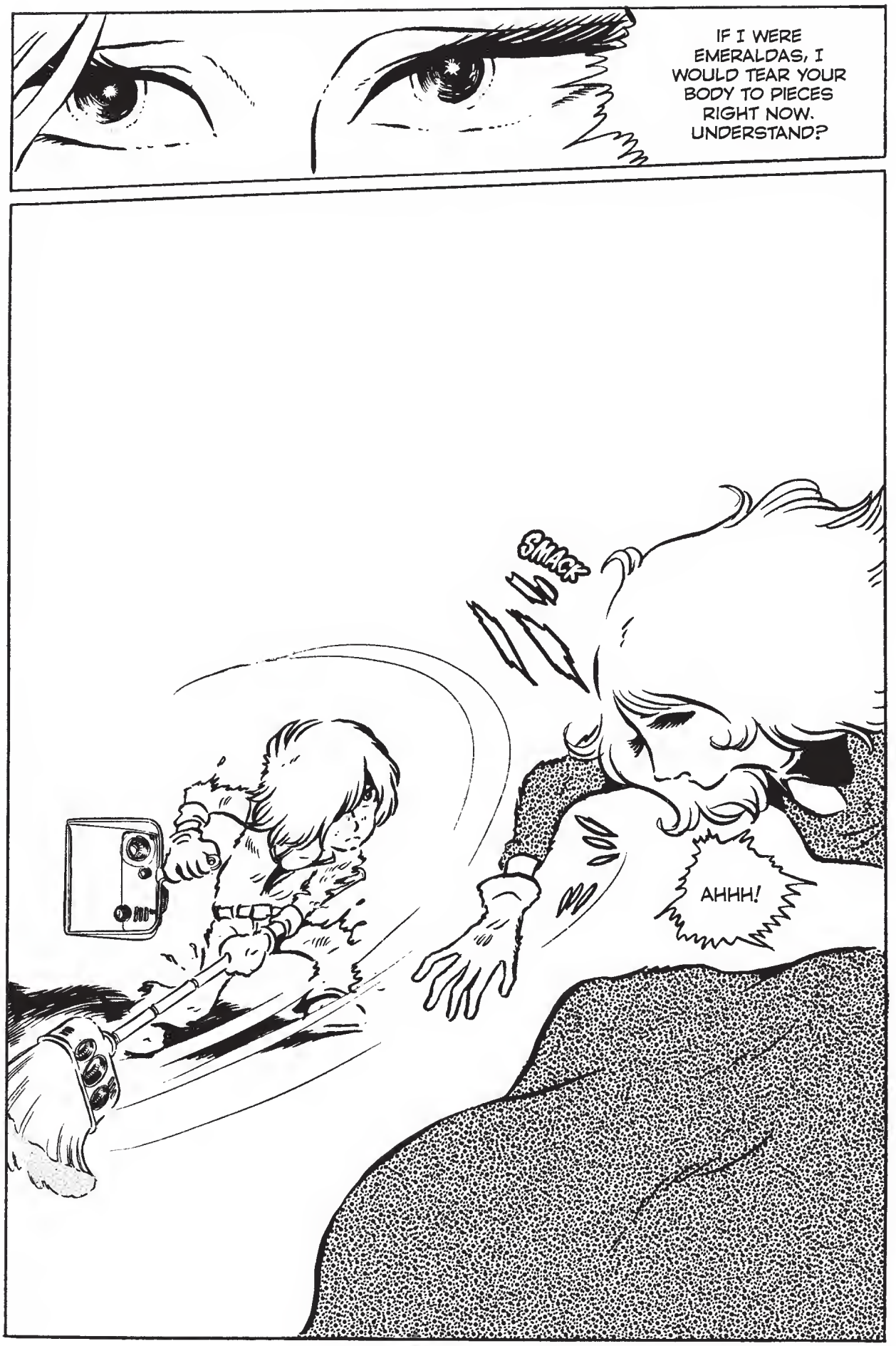

YES, LIKE THAT PENNILESS EARTH BOY, THERE WAS A TIME WHEN I HAD NO SHIP...
A TIME WHEN I LOOKED UP AT THE STARLIT SKY IN DESPAIR...

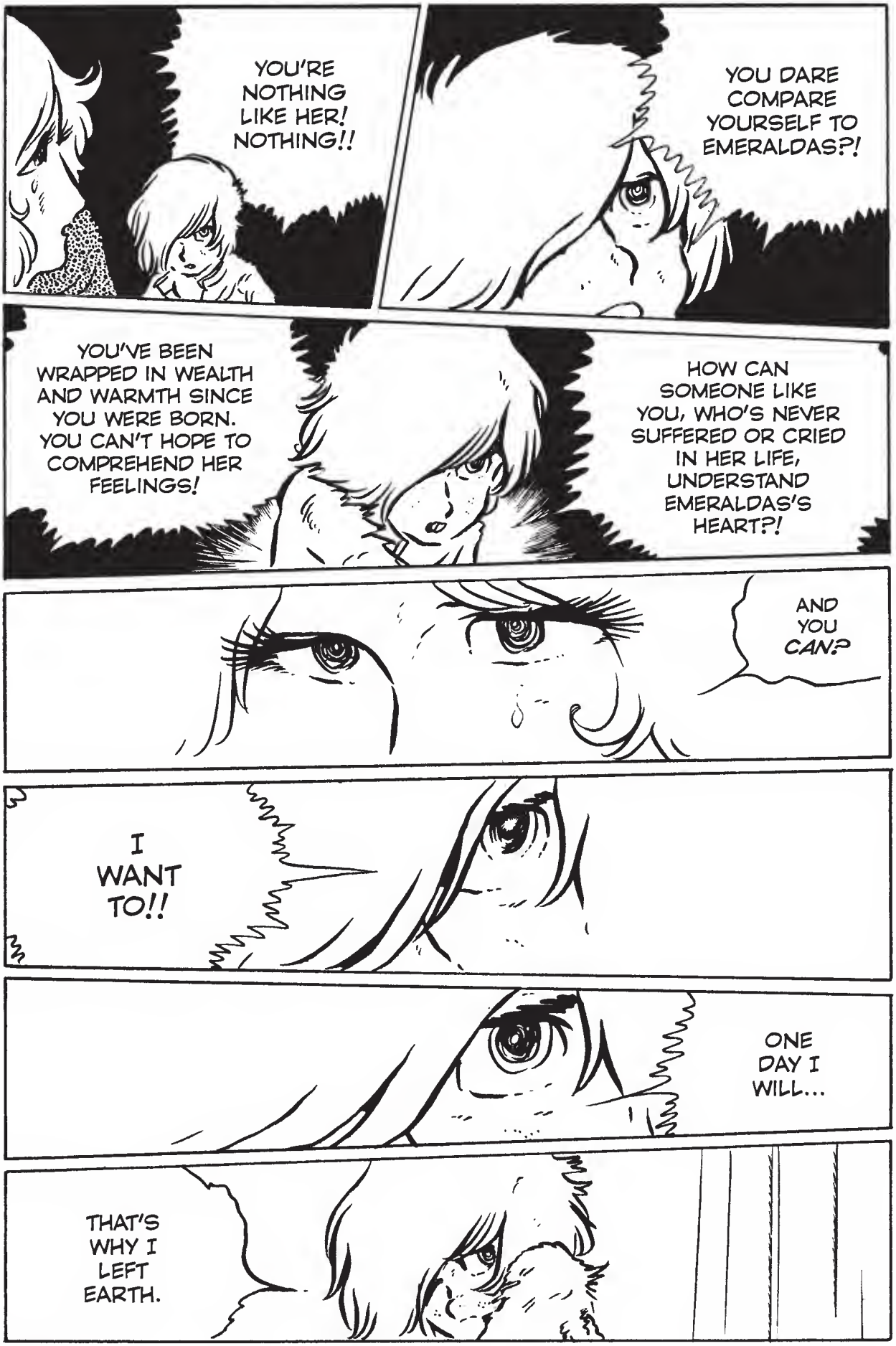

I MET THE QUEEN EMERALDAS ABOVE THE SHIFTING SANDS OF JURA...
A GIFT FROM AN OLD WARRIOR, WHO CLUNG TO LIFE JUST LONG ENOUGH TO GIVE HER TO ME. WHY...?
BEEP
BEEEP
!!
BEEP
I AM EMERALDAS... AND THAT WAS THE DAY I MET MY LIFEMATE.

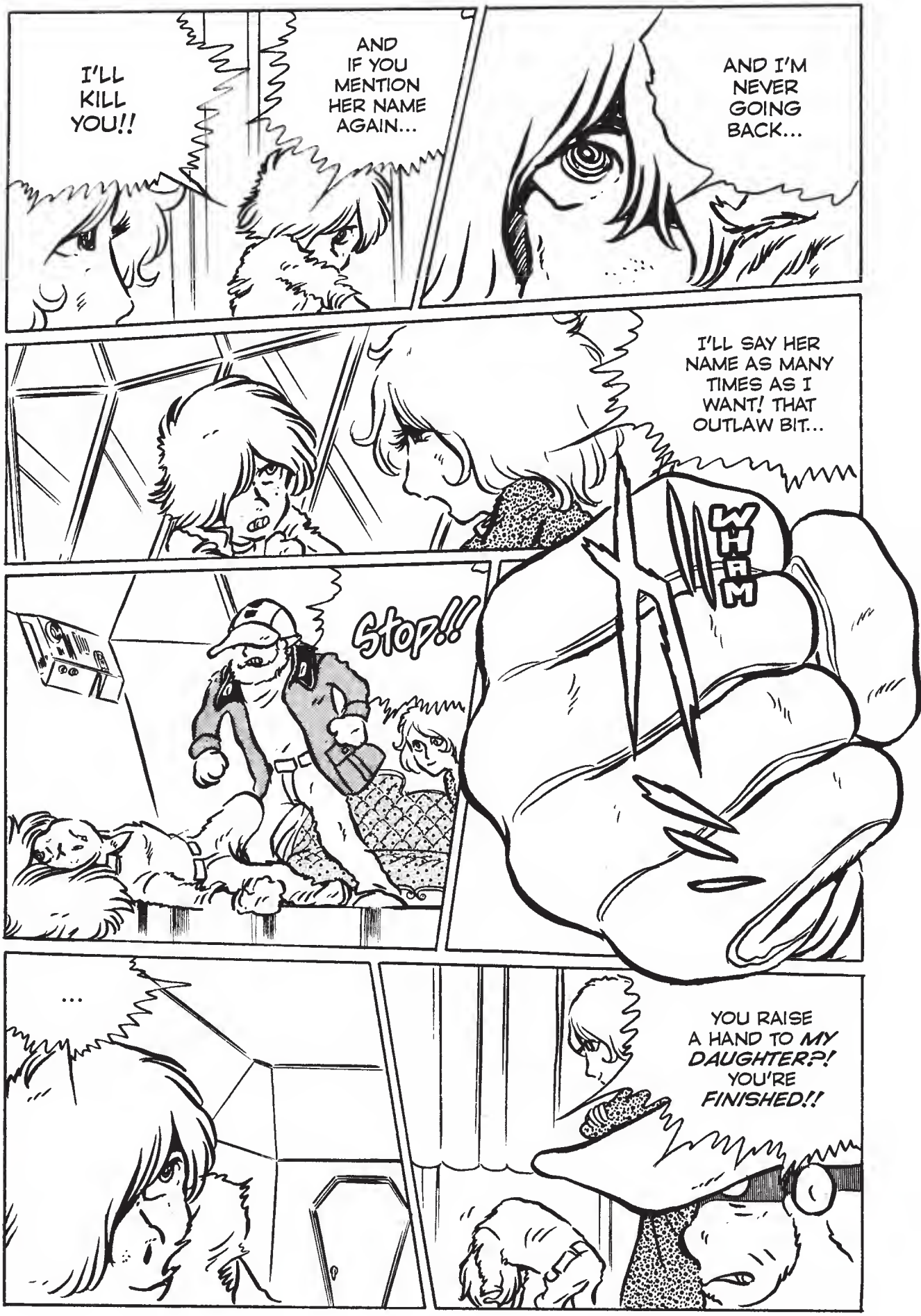

I AM EMERALDAS...
A SOLITARY TRAVELER
ON THE SEA OF STARS...
PEOPLE WONDER WHY I
WANDER THROUGH SPACE...
BUT THEY COULD NEVER
FATHOM MY REASONS.
ONLY I CAN UNDERSTAND.
A WOMAN ALONE, MY
DREAMS ARE MY OWN...
WHOOOOSH
BEEP
BEEP
BEEP

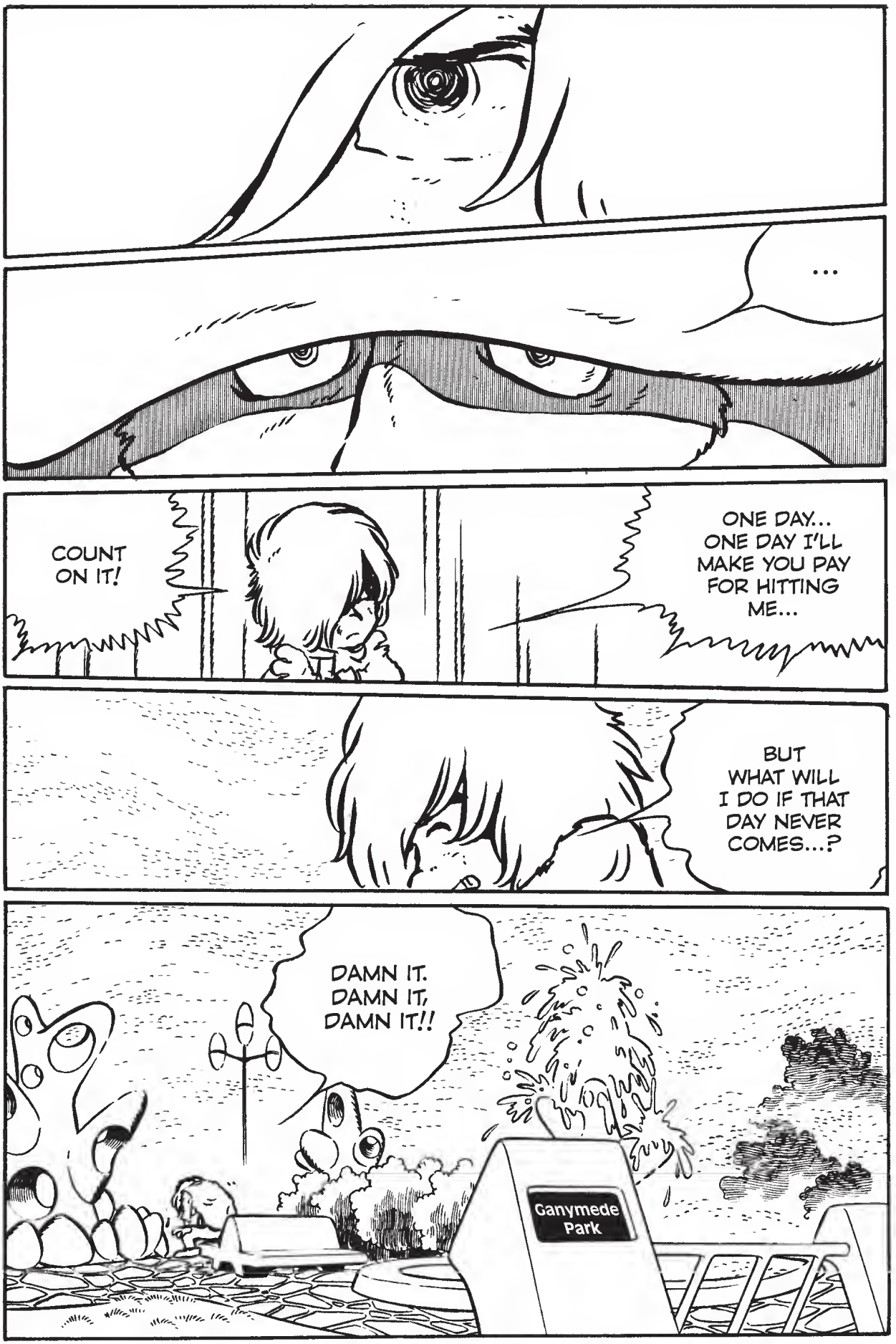
CRASH

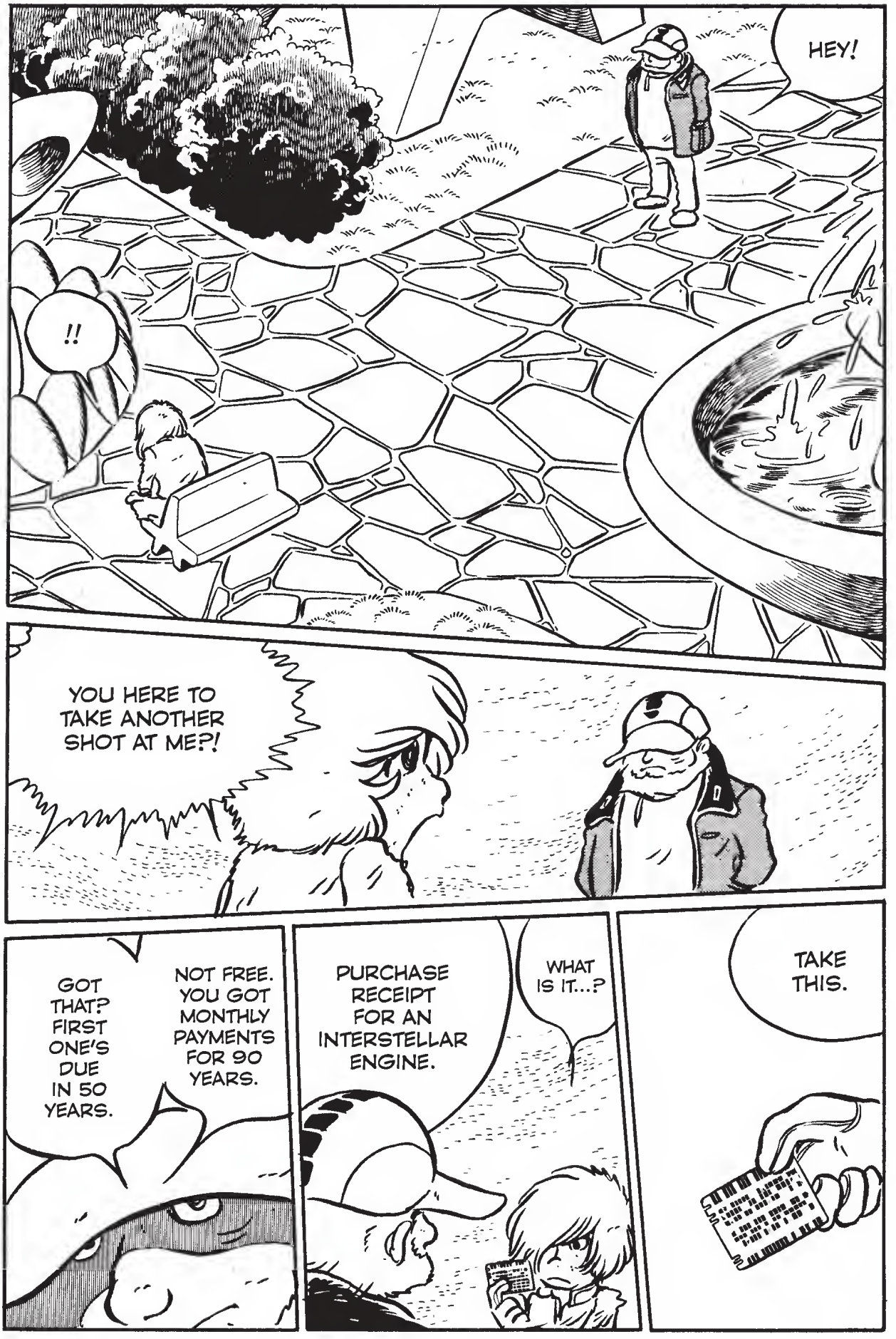

DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA HOW MUCH THAT VASE COST?!
FATHER! I INSIST YOU FIRE THIS RIDICULOUS MENIAL!
...
YES. HE BROKE THAT SPLENDID FLOWER VASE WE BROUGHT FROM EARTH.
HE MUST PAY!
YOU'RE NOT GETTING ANOTHER PENNY FROM US, UNDERSTAND?!
OH WELL.
YOU DARE SPEAK TO ME THAT WAY?! I AM YOUR FOREMAN'S DAUGHTER!!
MY FATHER PITIED YOUR INJURIES AND GAVE YOU THIS SIMPLE CLEANING JOB!!

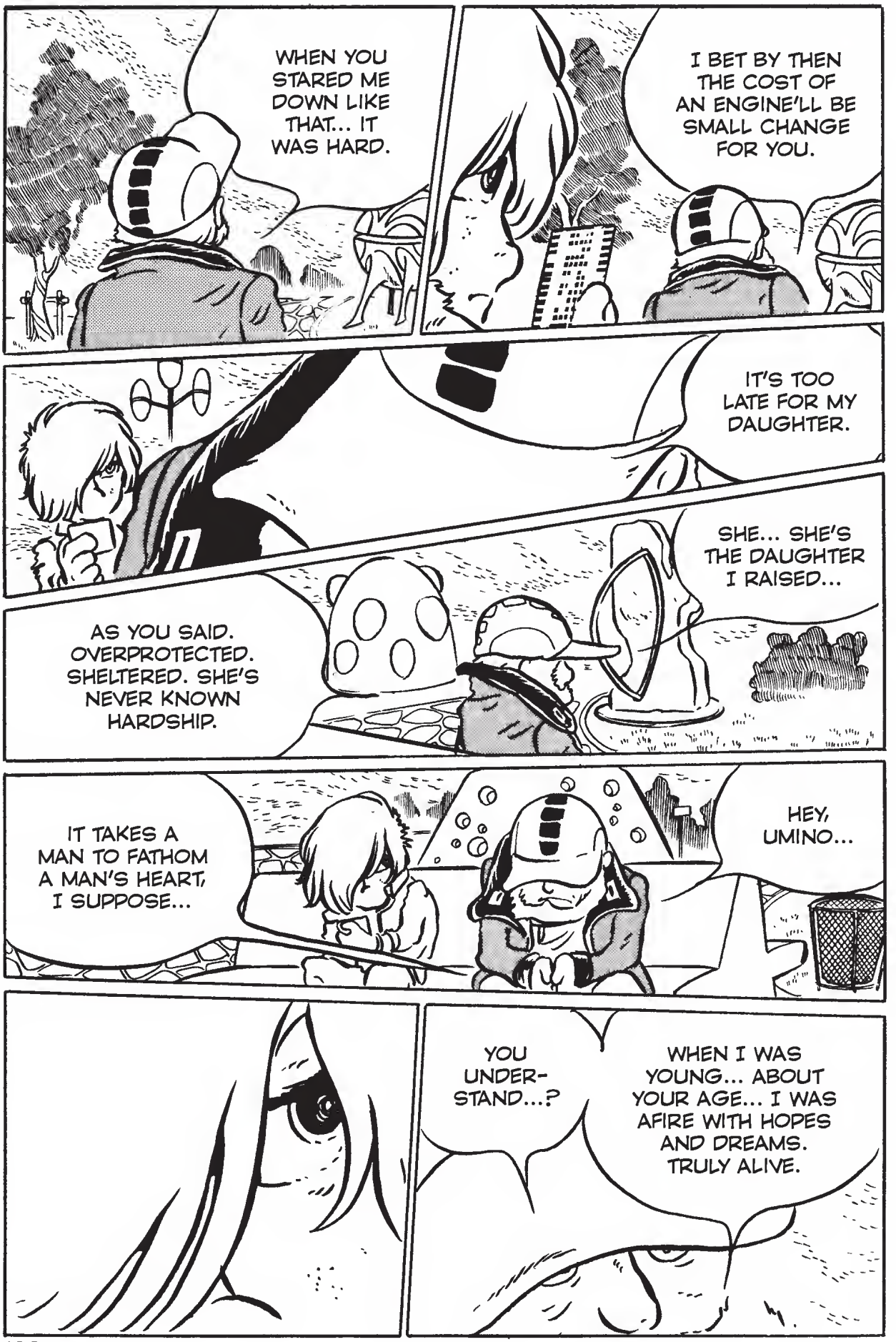

IF I WERE EMERALDAS, I WOULD TEAR YOUR BODY TO PIECES RIGHT NOW. UNDERSTAND?
SMACK
AHHH!

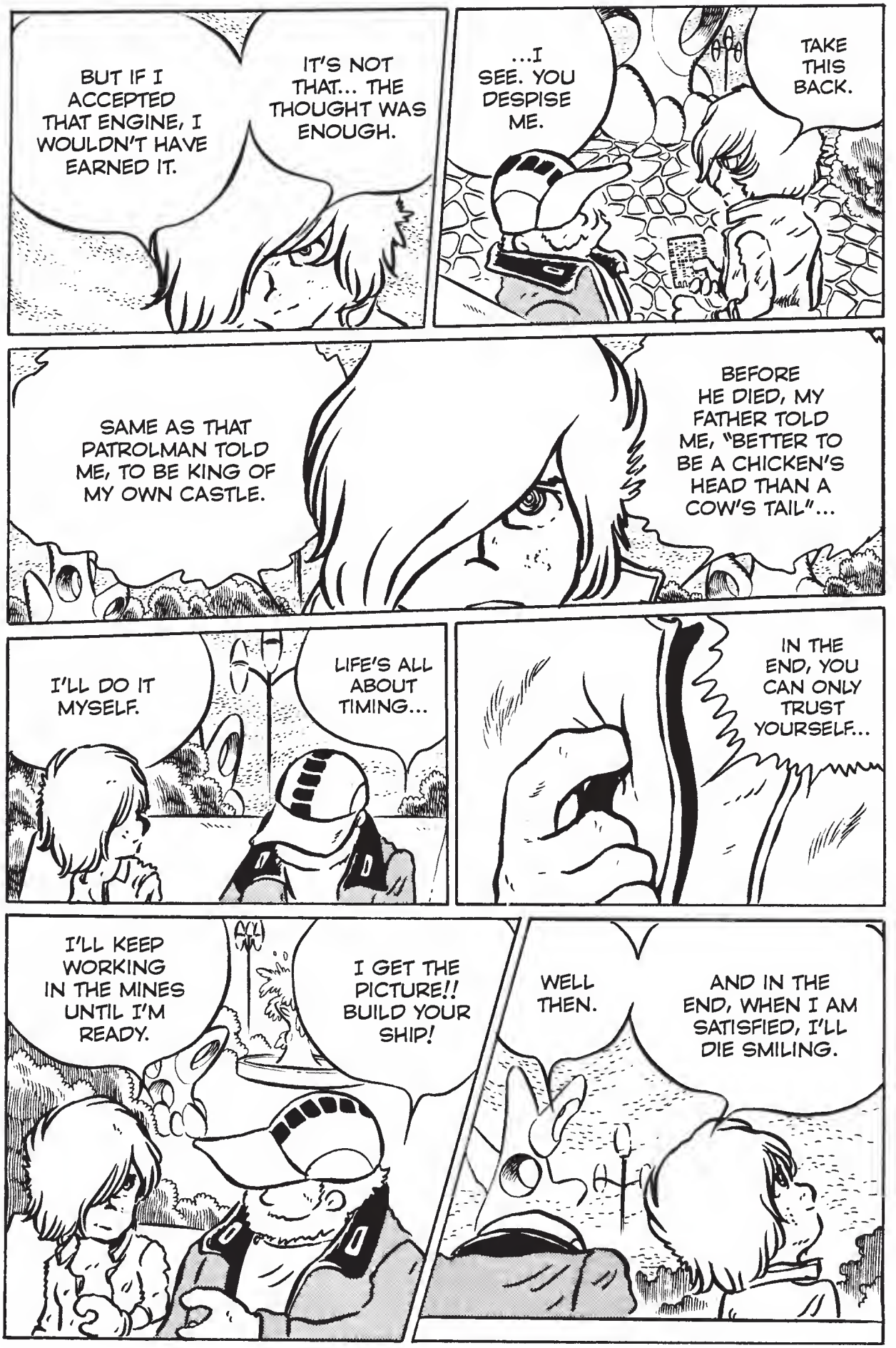

YOU'RE NOTHING LIKE HER! NOTHING!!
YOU DARE COMPARE YOURSELF TO EMERALDAS?!
YOU'VE BEEN WRAPPED IN WEALTH AND WARMTH SINCE YOU WERE BORN. YOU CAN'T HOPE TO COMPREHEND HER FEELINGS!
HOW CAN SOMEONE LIKE YOU, WHO'S NEVER SUFFERED OR CRIED IN HER LIFE, UNDERSTAND EMERALDAS'S HEART?!
AND YOU *CAN?*
I WANT TO!!
ONE DAY I WILL...
THAT'S WHY I LEFT EARTH.

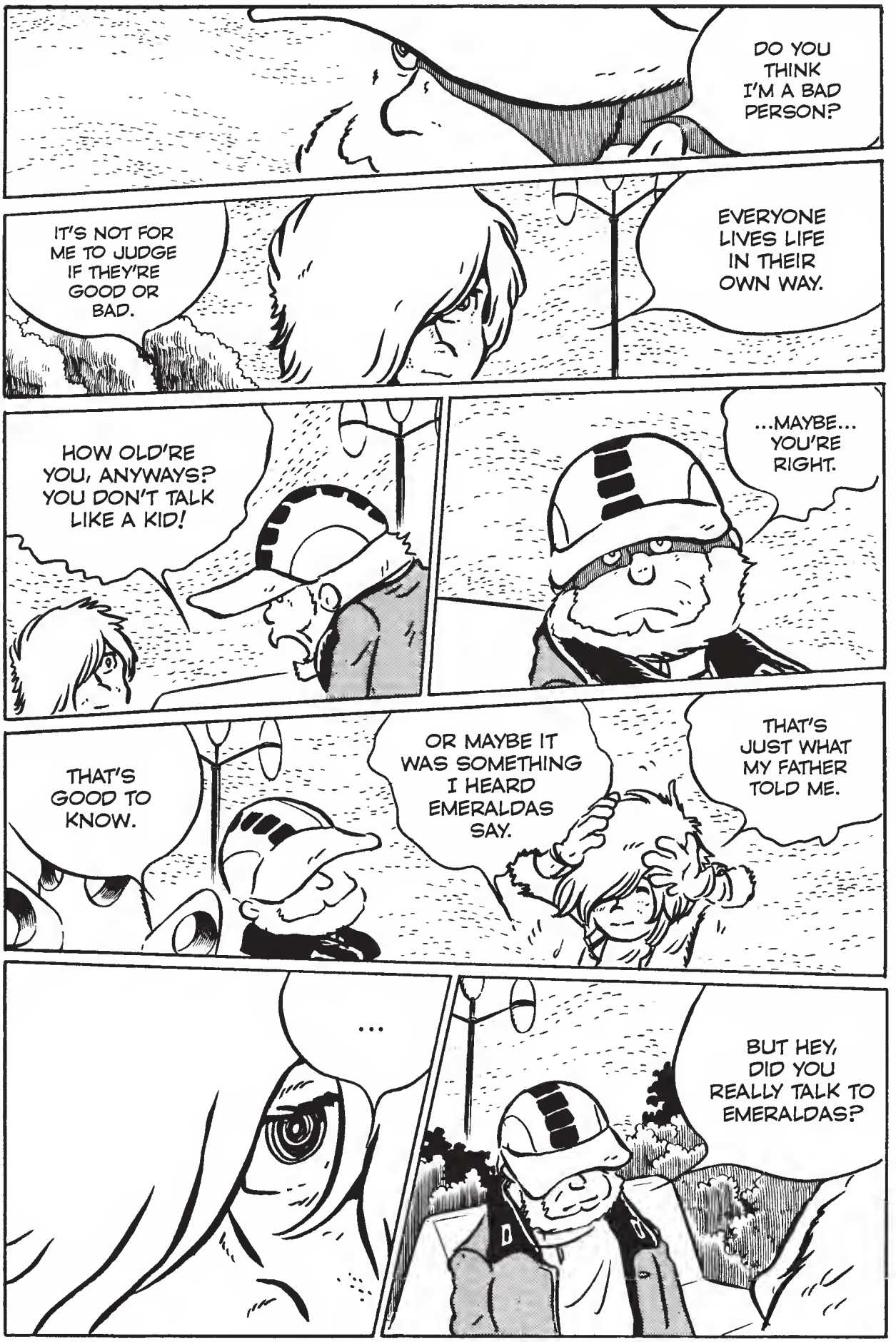

I'LL KILL YOU!!
AND IF YOU MENTION HER NAME AGAIN...
AND I'M NEVER GOING BACK...
I'LL SAY HER NAME AS MANY TIMES AS I WANT! THAT OUTLAW BIT...
WHAM
STOP!!
...
YOU RAISE A HAND TO *MY DAUGHTER?!* YOU'RE *FINISHED!!*

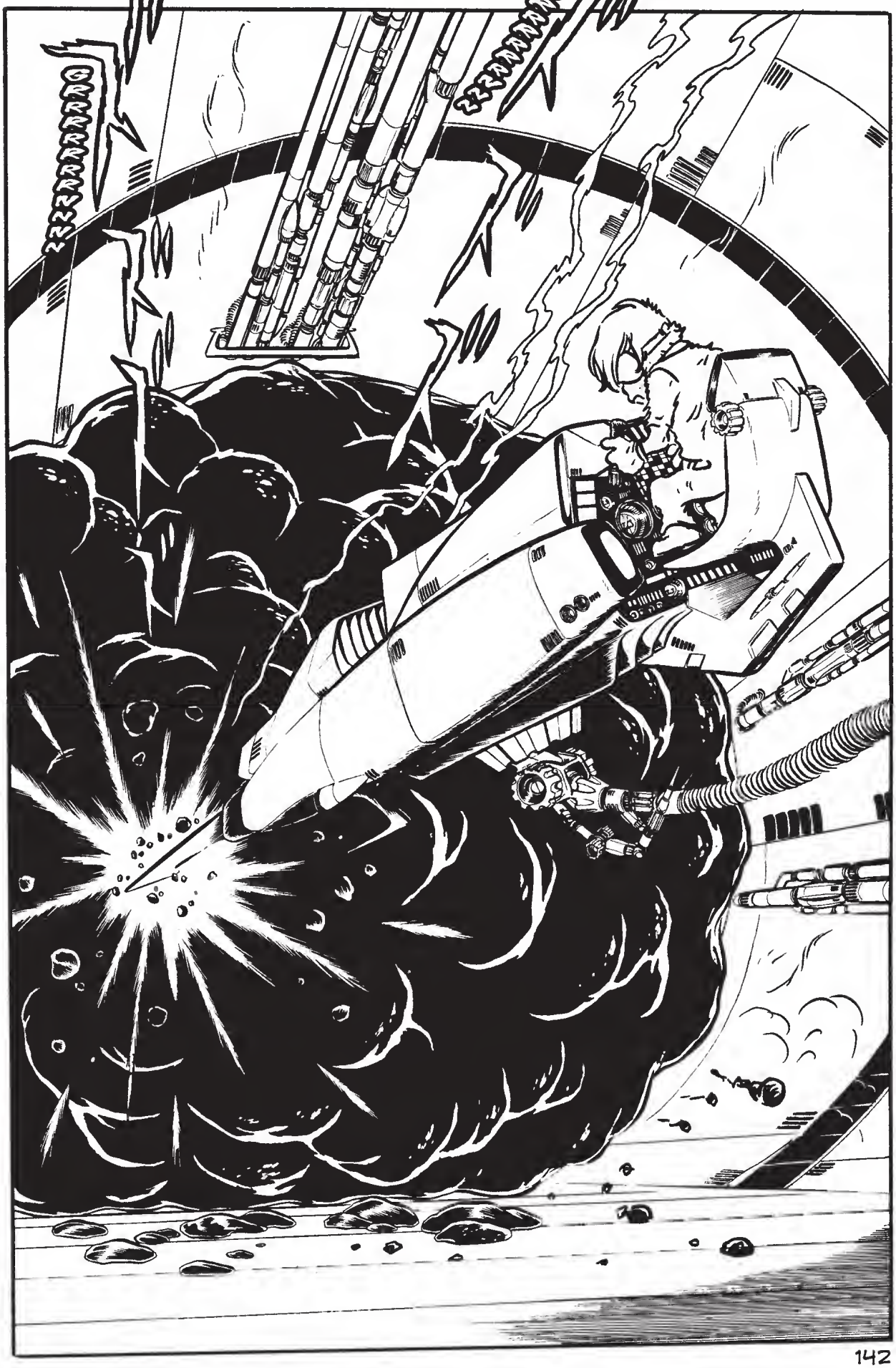

...
COUNT ON IT!
ONE DAY... ONE DAY I'LL MAKE YOU PAY FOR HITTING ME...
BUT WHAT WILL I DO IF THAT DAY NEVER COMES...?
DAMN IT. DAMN IT, DAMN IT!!
Ganymede Park

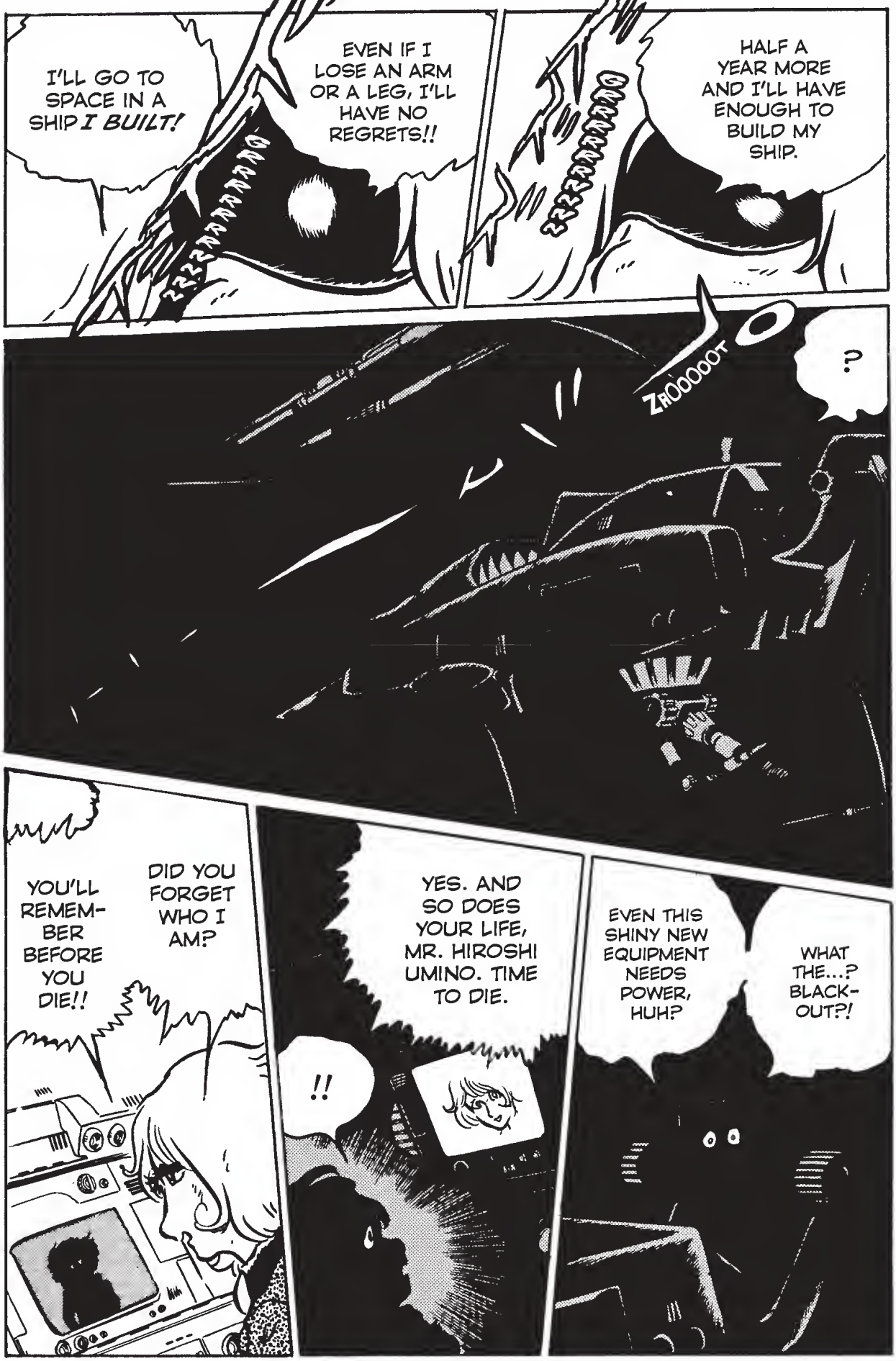

HEY!
!!
YOU HERE TO TAKE ANOTHER SHOT AT ME?!
TAKE THIS.
WHAT IS IT...?
PURCHASE RECEIPT FOR AN INTERSTELLAR ENGINE.
NOT FREE. YOU GOT MONTHLY PAYMENTS FOR 90 YEARS.
GOT THAT? FIRST ONE'S DUE IN 50 YEARS.

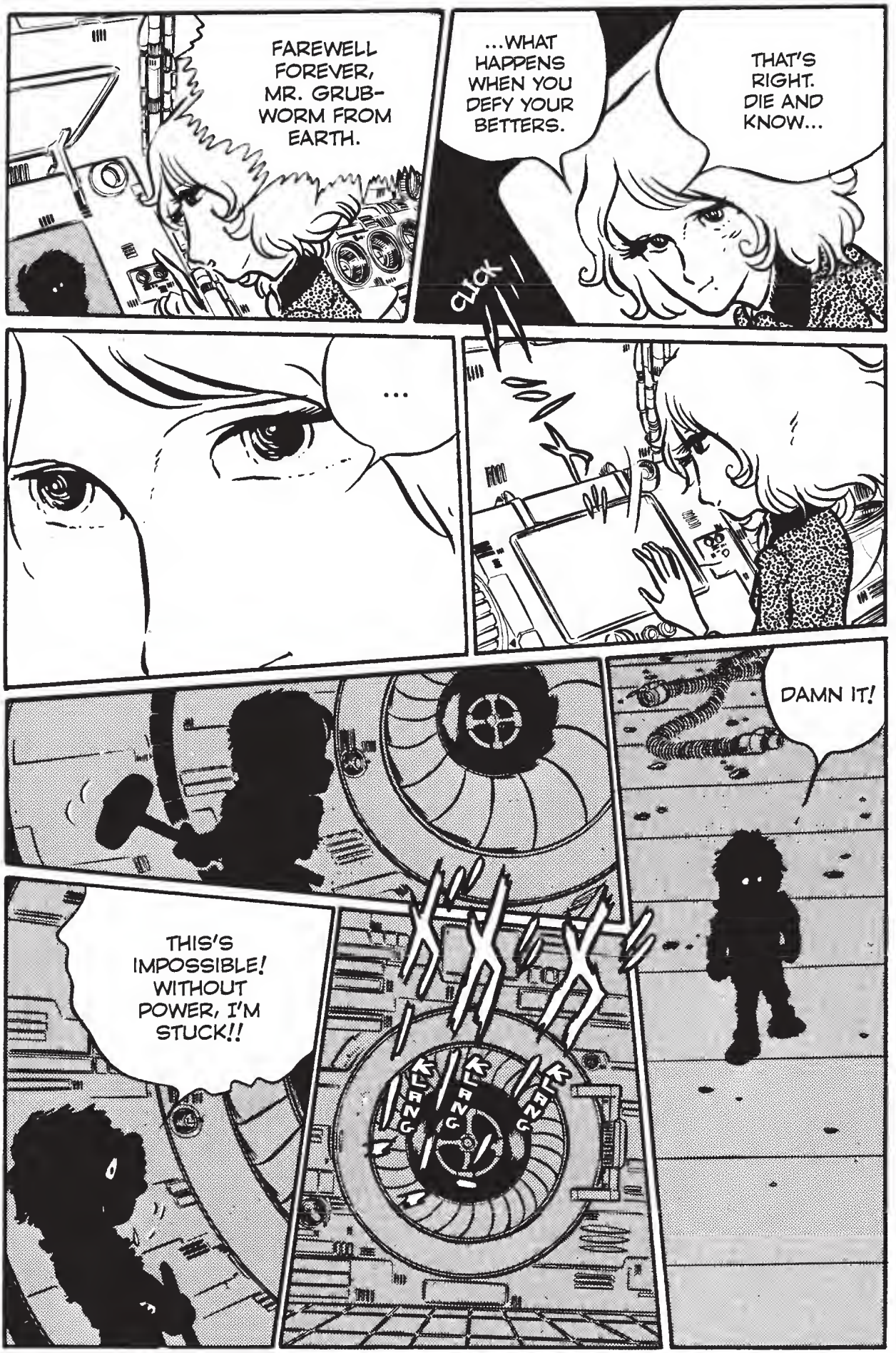

WHEN YOU STARED ME DOWN LIKE THAT... IT WAS HARD.
I BET BY THEN THE COST OF AN ENGINE'LL BE SMALL CHANGE FOR YOU.
IT'S TOO LATE FOR MY DAUGHTER.
SHE... SHE'S THE DAUGHTER I RAISED...
AS YOU SAID. OVERPROTECTED. SHELTERED. SHE'S NEVER KNOWN HARDSHIP.
IT TAKES A MAN TO FATHOM A MAN'S HEART, I SUPPOSE...
HEY, UMINO...
YOU UNDER-STAND...?
WHEN I WAS YOUNG... ABOUT YOUR AGE... I WAS AFIRE WITH HOPES AND DREAMS. TRULY ALIVE.

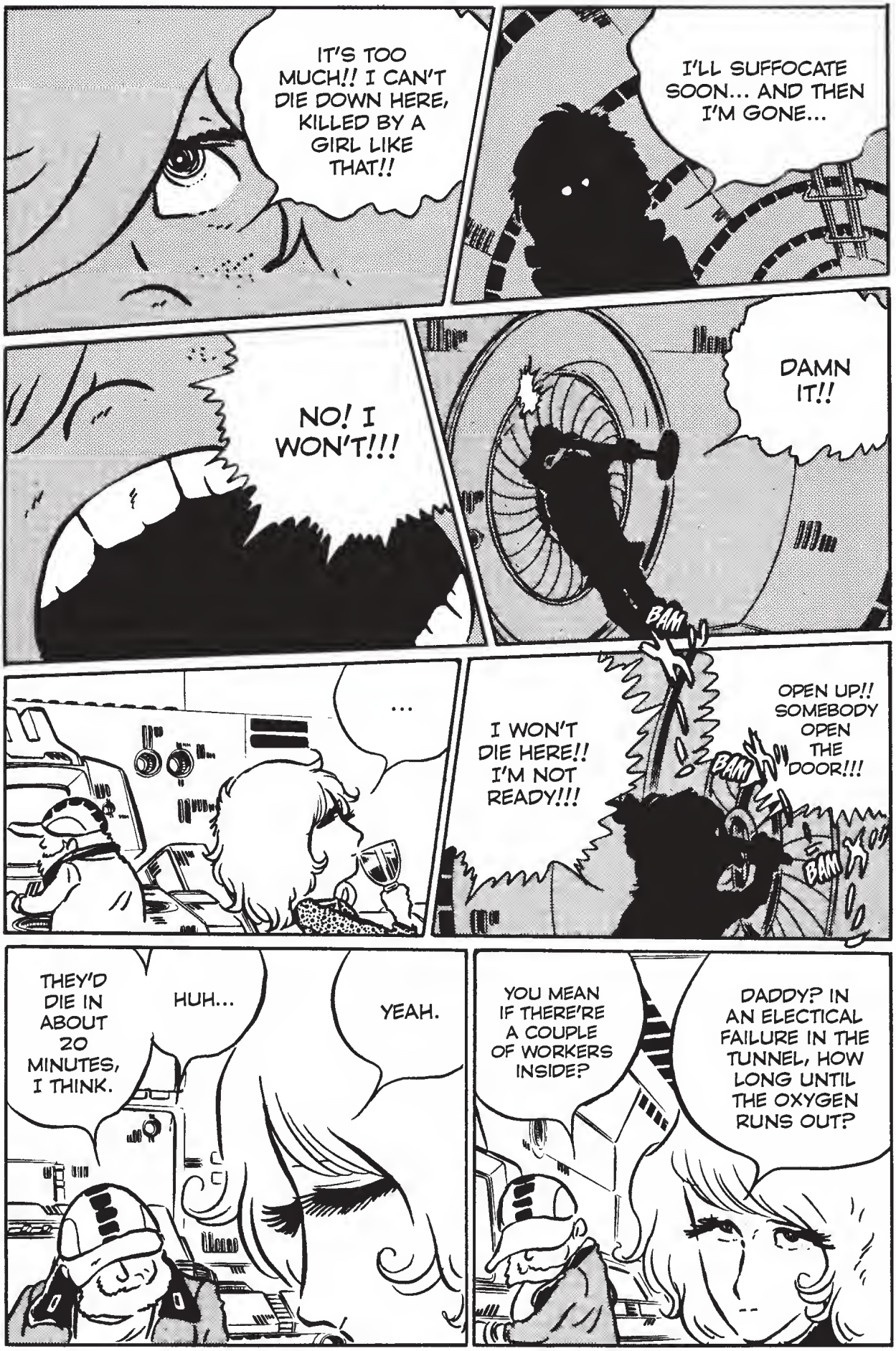

BUT IF I ACCEPTED THAT ENGINE, I WOULDN'T HAVE EARNED IT.
IT'S NOT THAT... THE THOUGHT WAS ENOUGH.
...I SEE. YOU DESPISE ME.
TAKE THIS BACK.
SAME AS THAT PATROLMAN TOLD ME, TO BE KING OF MY OWN CASTLE.
BEFORE HE DIED, MY FATHER TOLD ME, "BETTER TO BE A CHICKEN'S HEAD THAN A COW'S TAIL"...
I'LL DO IT MYSELF.
LIFE'S ALL ABOUT TIMING...
IN THE END, YOU CAN ONLY TRUST YOURSELF...
I'LL KEEP WORKING IN THE MINES UNTIL I'M READY.
I GET THE PICTURE!! BUILD YOUR SHIP!
WELL THEN.
AND IN THE END, WHEN I AM SATISFIED, I'LL DIE SMILING.

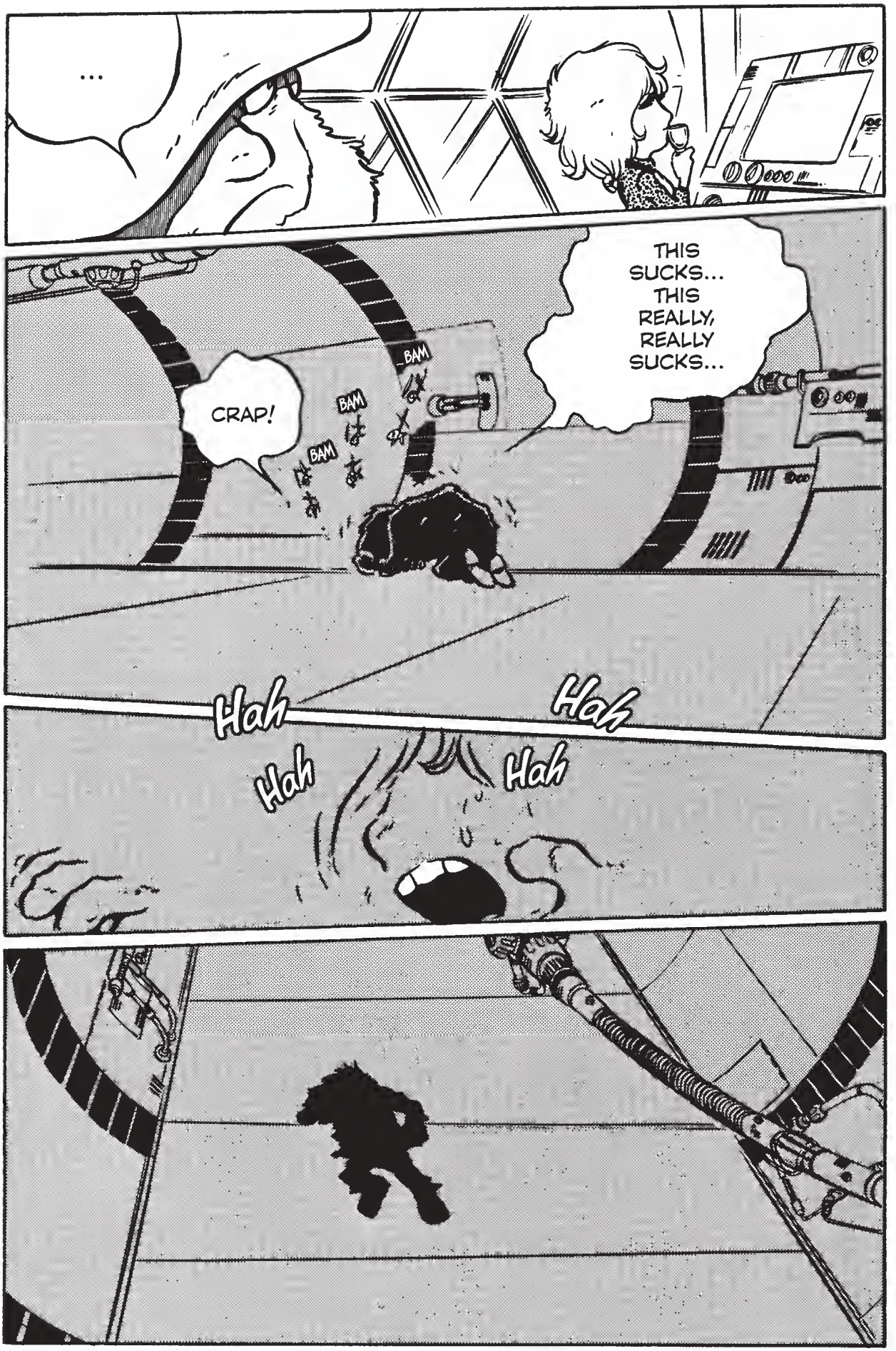

DO YOU THINK I'M A BAD PERSON?
EVERYONE LIVES LIFE IN THEIR OWN WAY.
IT'S NOT FOR ME TO JUDGE IF THEY'RE GOOD OR BAD.
...MAYBE... YOU'RE RIGHT.
HOW OLD'RE YOU, ANYWAYS? YOU DON'T TALK LIKE A KID!
THAT'S JUST WHAT MY FATHER TOLD ME.
OR MAYBE IT WAS SOMETHING I HEARD EMERALDAS SAY.
THAT'S GOOD TO KNOW.
BUT HEY, DID YOU REALLY TALK TO EMERALDAS?
...


CRRRRRRRRRR
CRRRRRRRRRR


I'LL GO TO SPACE IN A SHIP *I BUILT!*
EVEN IF I LOSE AN ARM OR A LEG, I'LL HAVE NO REGRETS!!
GRRRRRRR
HALF A YEAR MORE AND I'LL HAVE ENOUGH TO BUILD MY SHIP.
GRRRRRRR
ZROOOOOT
?
YOU'LL REMEMBER BEFORE YOU DIE!!
DID YOU FORGET WHO I AM?
YES. AND SO DOES YOUR LIFE, MR. HIROSHI UMINO. TIME TO DIE.
!!
EVEN THIS SHINY NEW EQUIPMENT NEEDS POWER, HUH?
WHAT THE...? BLACK-OUT?!

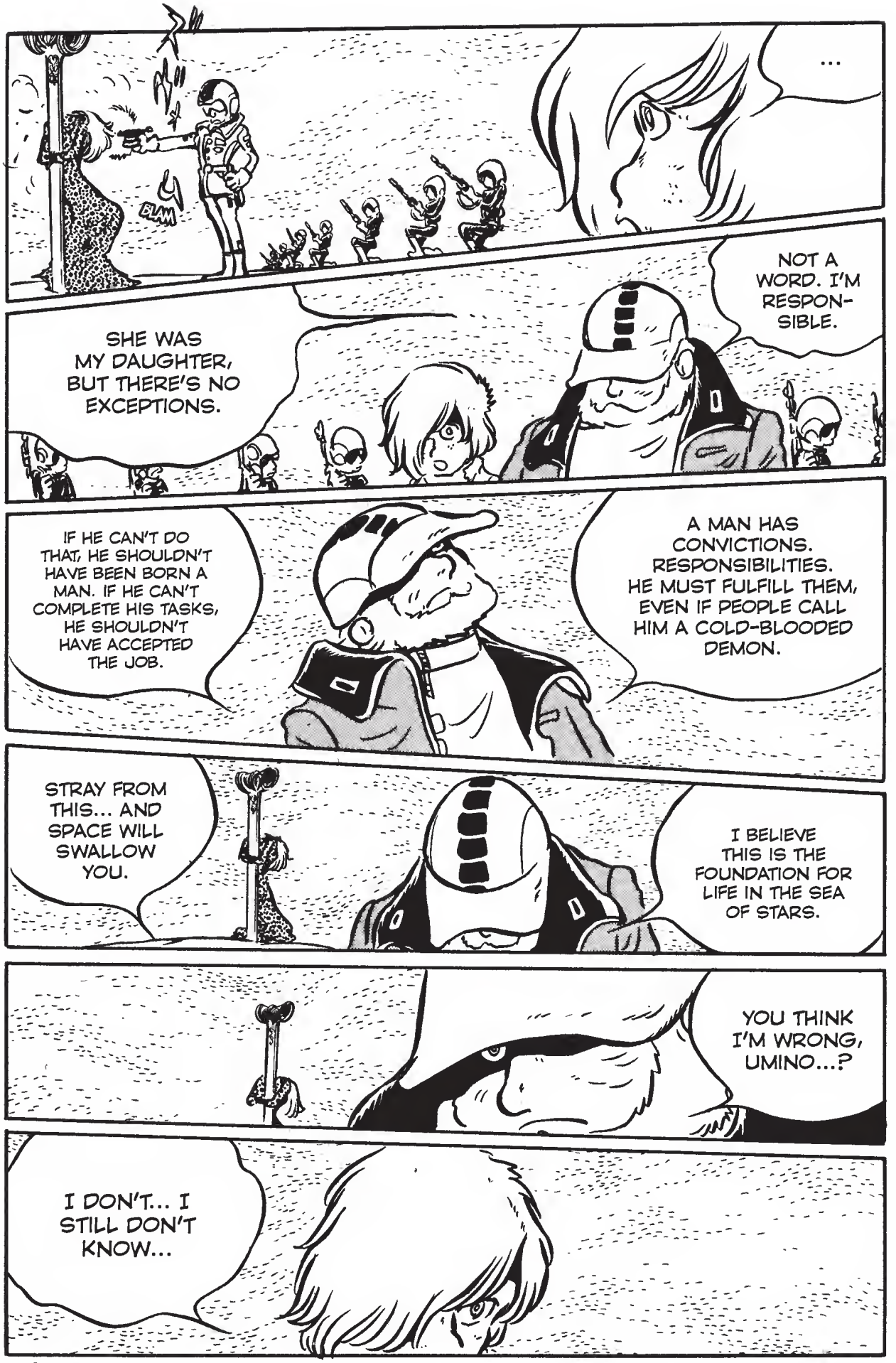

FAREWELL FOREVER, MR. GRUB-WORM FROM EARTH.
...WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU DEFY YOUR BETTERS.
THAT'S RIGHT. DIE AND KNOW...
click
...
DAMN IT!
THIS'S IMPOSSIBLE! WITHOUT POWER, I'M STUCK!!
KLANG
KLANG
KLANG

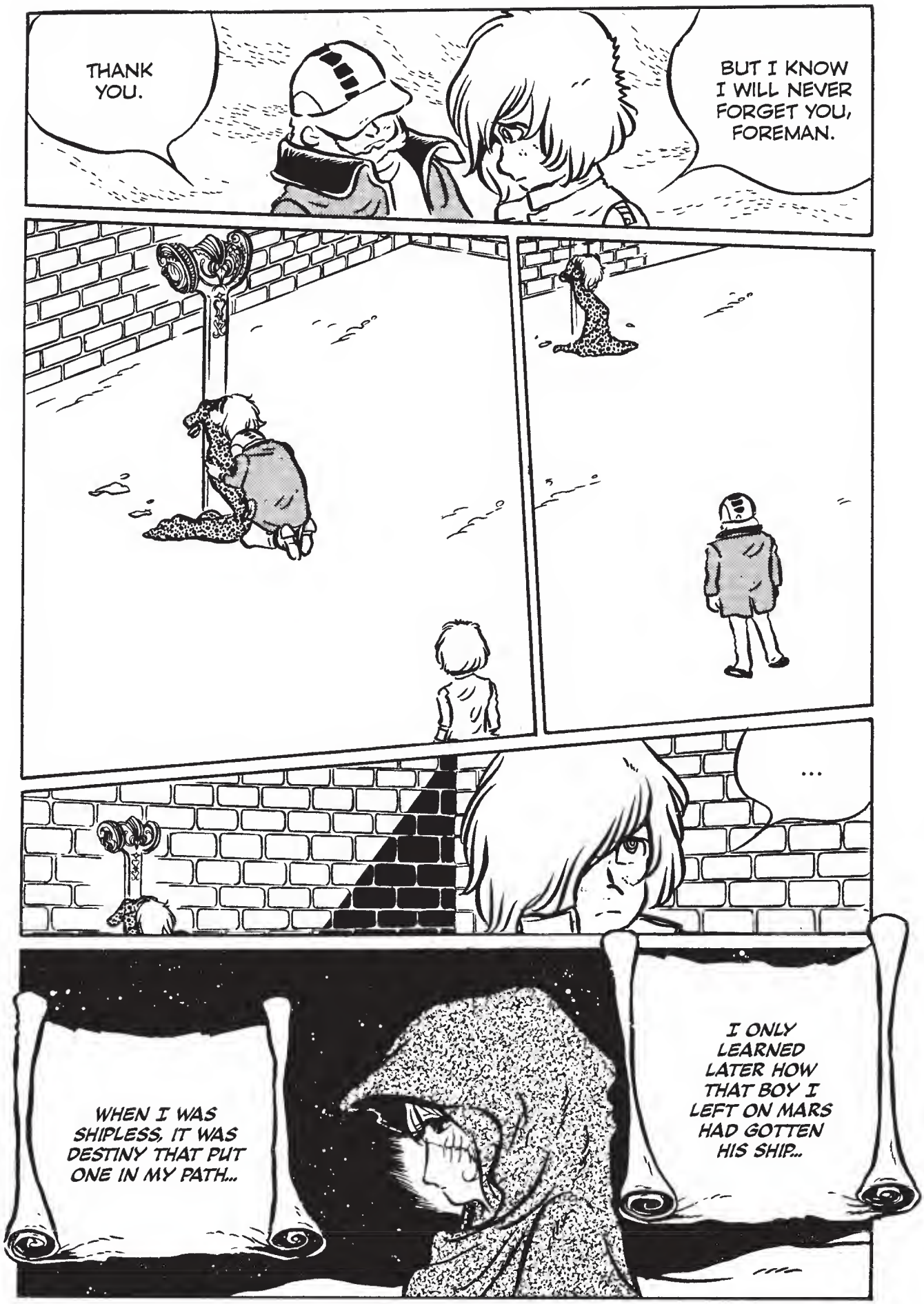

IT'S TOO MUCH!! I CAN'T DIE DOWN HERE, KILLED BY A GIRL LIKE THAT!!
I'LL SUFFOCATE SOON... AND THEN I'M GONE...
NO! I WON'T!!!
DAMN IT!!
BAM
...
I WON'T DIE HERE!! I'M NOT READY!!!
OPEN UP!! SOMEBODY OPEN THE DOOR!!!
BAM
BAM
THEY'D DIE IN ABOUT 20 MINUTES, I THINK.
HUH...
YEAH.
YOU MEAN IF THERE'RE A COUPLE OF WORKERS INSIDE?
DADDY? IN AN ELECTICAL FAILURE IN THE TUNNEL, HOW LONG UNTIL THE OXYGEN RUNS OUT?


...
THIS SUCKS... THIS REALLY, REALLY SUCKS...
CRAP!
BAM
BAM
BAM
Hah
Hah
Hah
Hah

...
YOU OK, UMINO?
SHOOOOON
STOW IT. THIS WAS MY FAULT.
THANK YOU SO...
THAT WAS CLOSE...
FIRE!
READY! AIM!

BRAAM
BZZAT


...
BLAM
NOT A WORD. I'M RESPONSIBLE.
SHE WAS MY DAUGHTER, BUT THERE'S NO EXCEPTIONS.
A MAN HAS CONVICTIONS. RESPONSIBILITIES. HE MUST FULFILL THEM, EVEN IF PEOPLE CALL HIM A COLD-BLOODED DEMON.
IF HE CAN'T DO THAT, HE SHOULDN'T HAVE BEEN BORN A MAN. IF HE CAN'T COMPLETE HIS TASKS, HE SHOULDN'T HAVE ACCEPTED THE JOB.
I BELIEVE THIS IS THE FOUNDATION FOR LIFE IN THE SEA OF STARS.
STRAY FROM THIS... AND SPACE WILL SWALLOW YOU.
YOU THINK I'M WRONG, UMINO...?
I DON'T... I STILL DON'T KNOW...


THANK YOU.
BUT I KNOW I WILL NEVER FORGET YOU, FOREMAN.
...
WHEN I WAS SHIPLESS, IT WAS DESTINY THAT PUT ONE IN MY PATH...
I ONLY LEARNED LATER HOW THAT BOY I LEFT ON MARS HAD GOTTEN HIS SHIP...

THE QUEEN EMERALDAS... WITH WHOM I SHALL WANDER THE SEA OF STARS UNTIL THE FIRE OF MY LIFE FADES...
SHWOOO

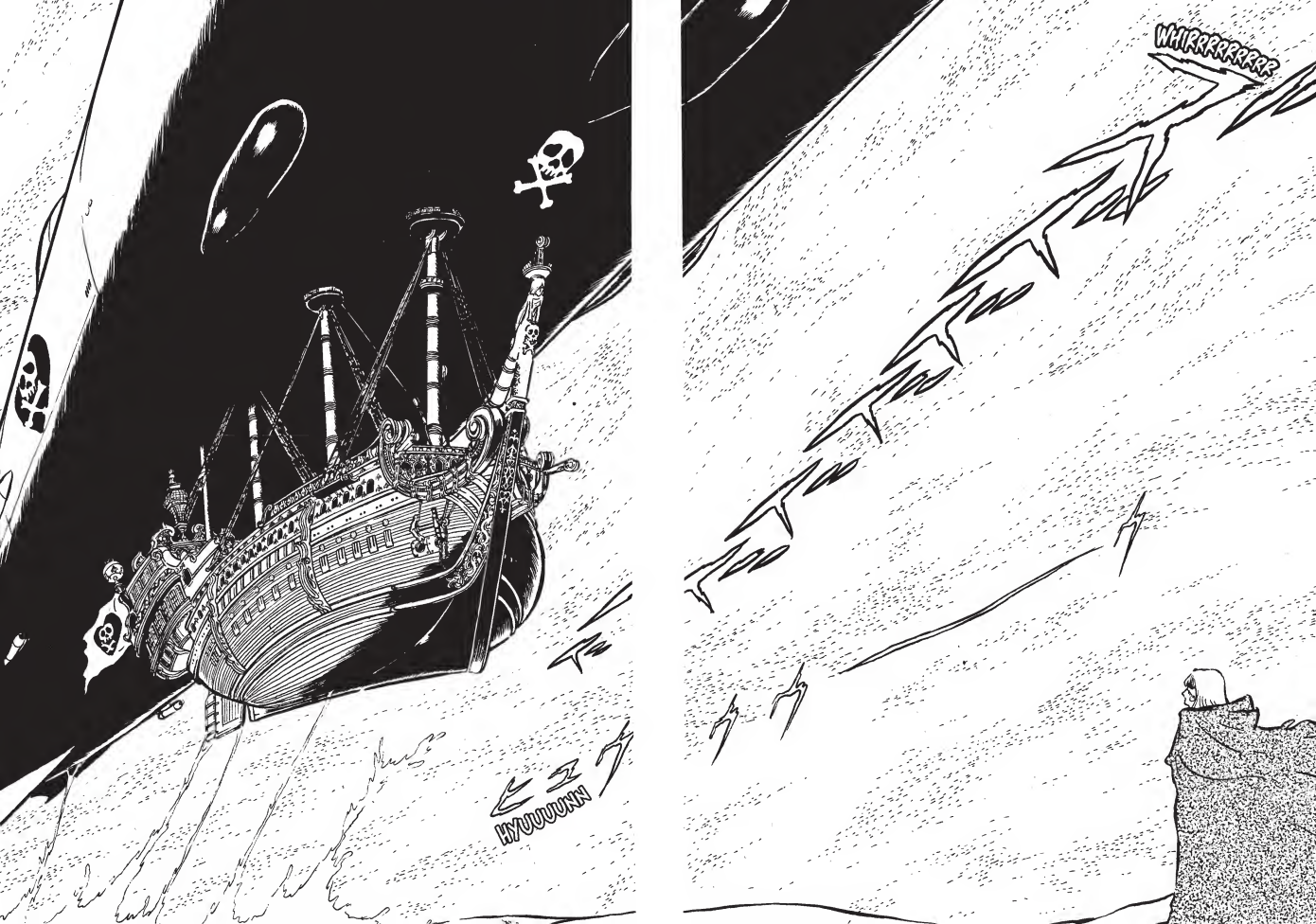
FATE ARRANGED THE MEETING BETWEEN MYSELF AND THE QUEEN EMERALDAS. IN TRUTH, SHE HAD BEEN WAITING FOR ME FOR A LONG TIME.

THE QUEEN EMERALDAS ROSE TO GREET ME, SURFACING FROM BENEATH THE SHIFTING SANDS OF JURA... BLAZING WITH THE FIRE OF LIFE, SHE EMERGED.

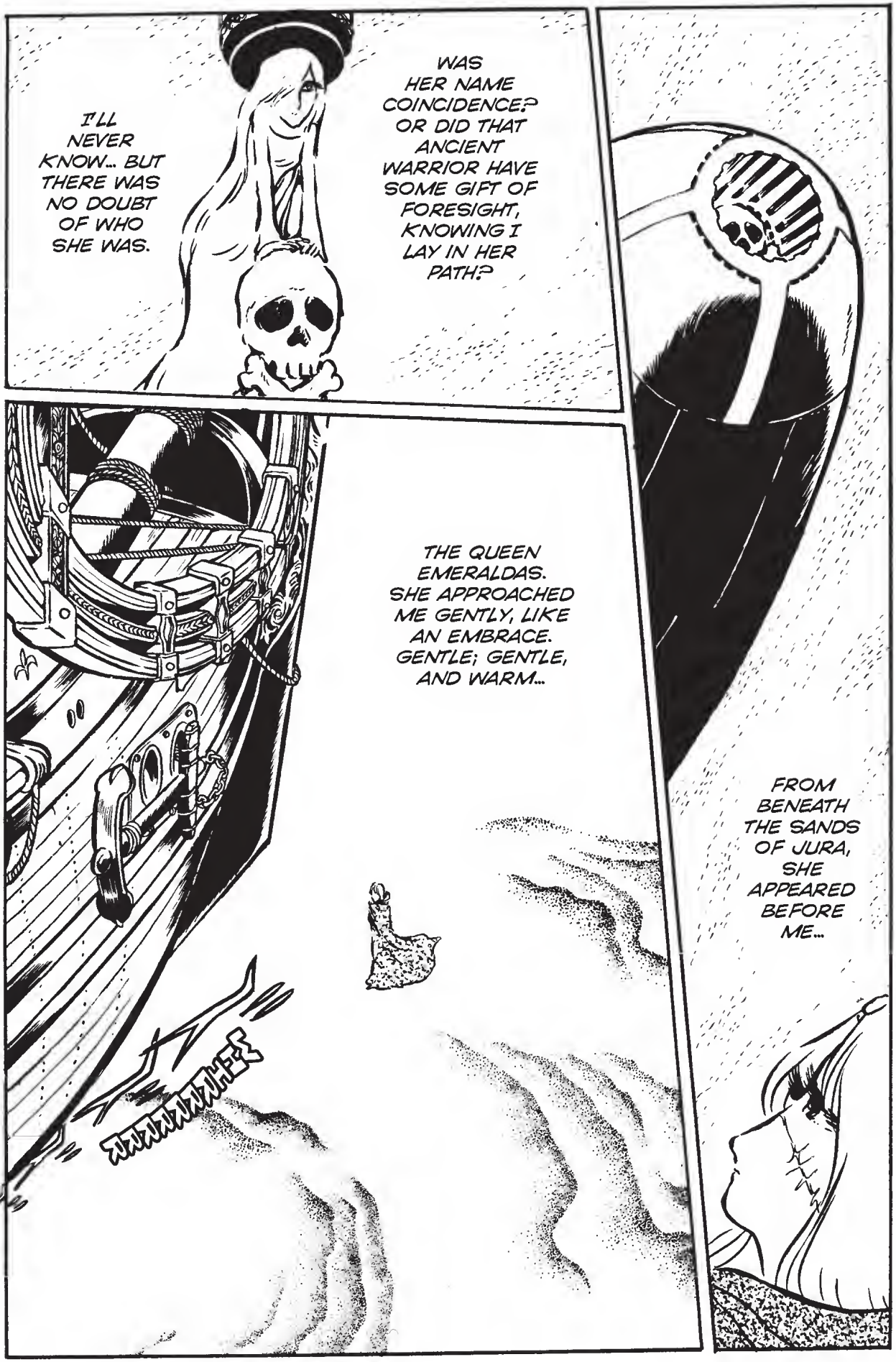
GON
GON
GONN
GONN

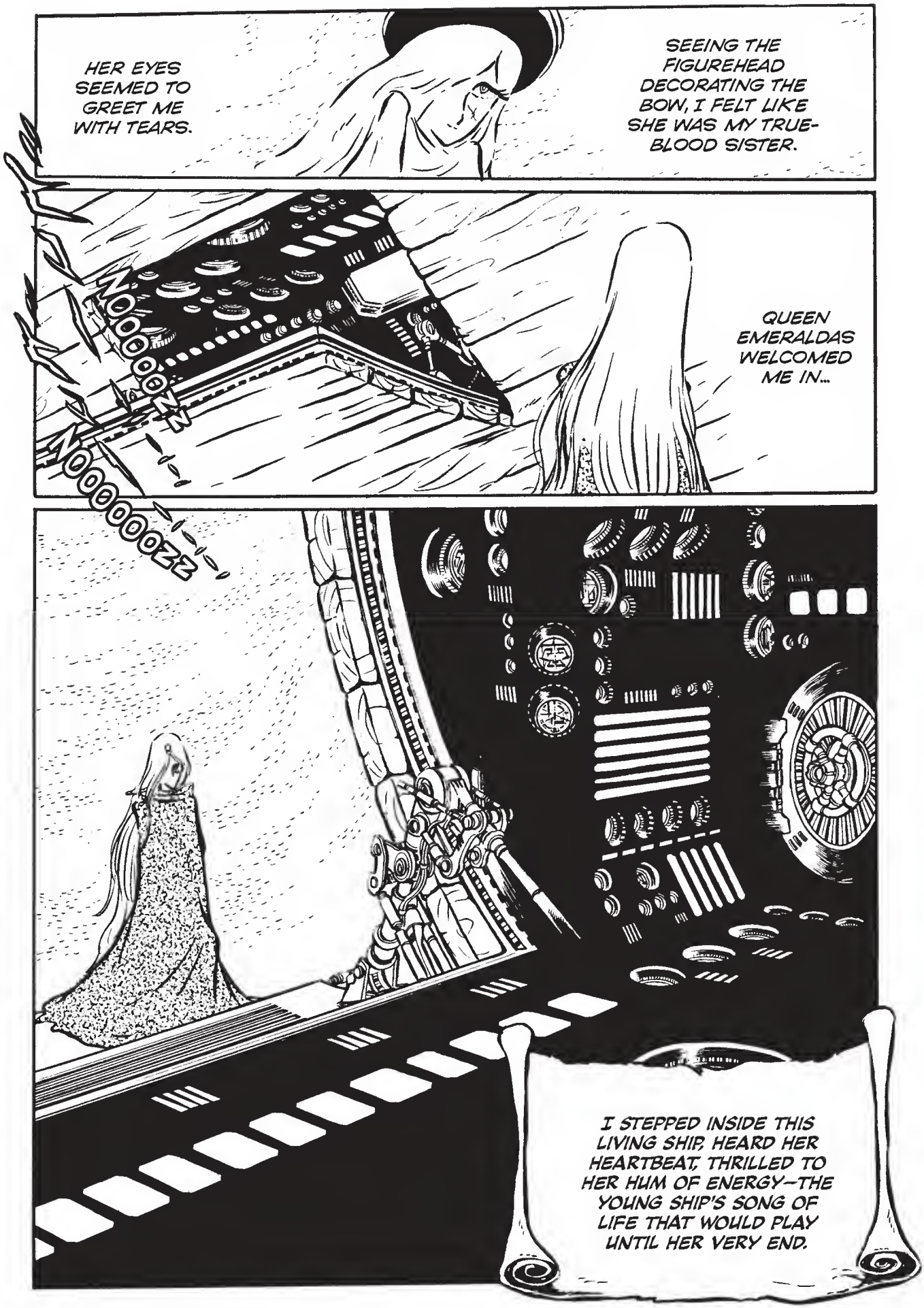
200
200
200
200

ZOOOOM


WHIRRRRRRRR
HYUUUUN

AAAAAAHH-H

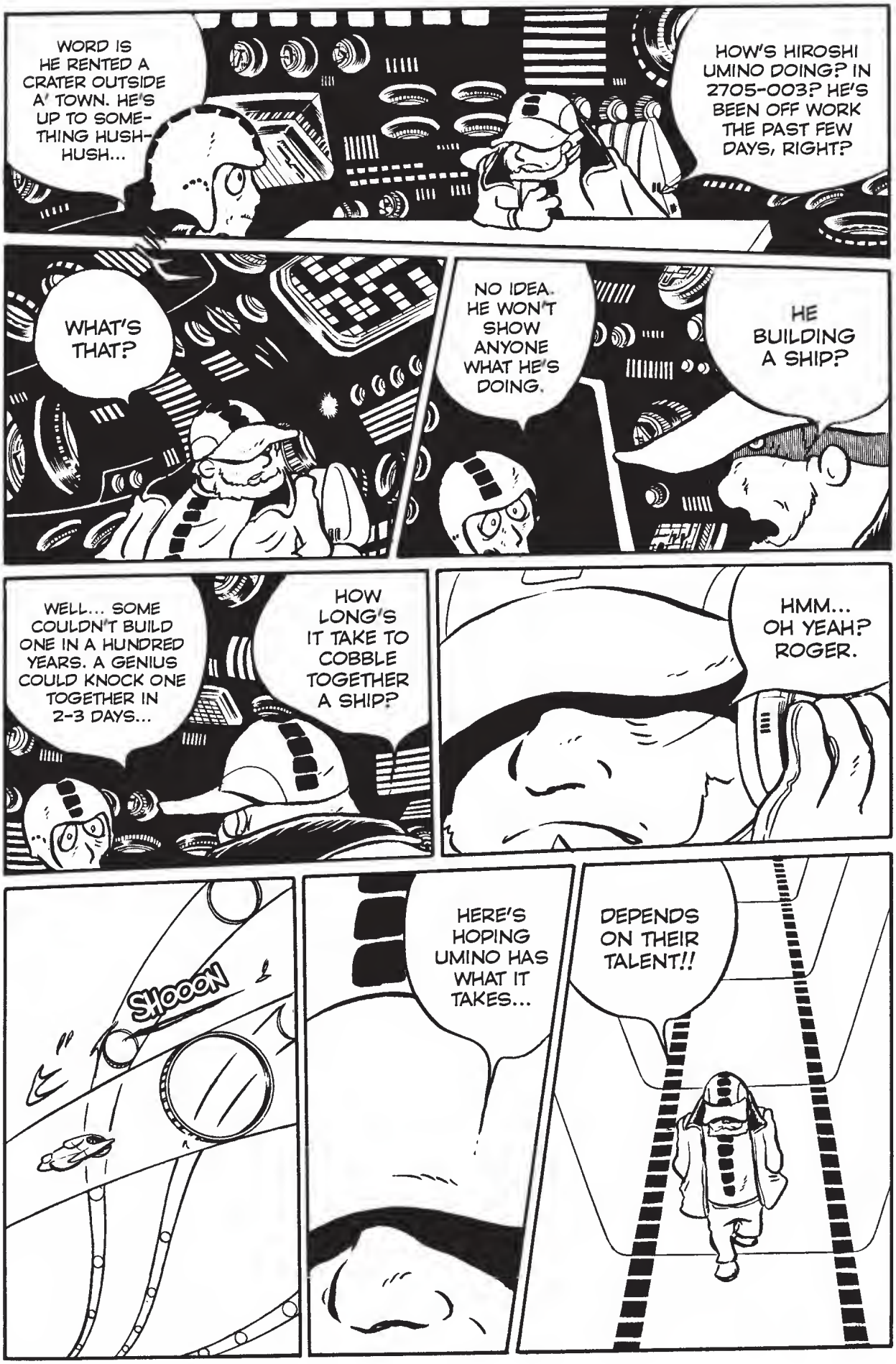

I'LL NEVER KNOW... BUT THERE WAS NO DOUBT OF WHO SHE WAS.
WAS HER NAME COINCIDENCE? OR DID THAT ANCIENT WARRIOR HAVE SOME GIFT OF FORESIGHT, KNOWING I LAY IN HER PATH?
THE QUEEN EMERALDAS. SHE APPROACHED ME GENTLY, LIKE AN EMBRACE. GENTLE; GENTLE, AND WARM...
FROM BENEATH THE SANDS OF JURA, SHE APPEARED BEFORE ME...

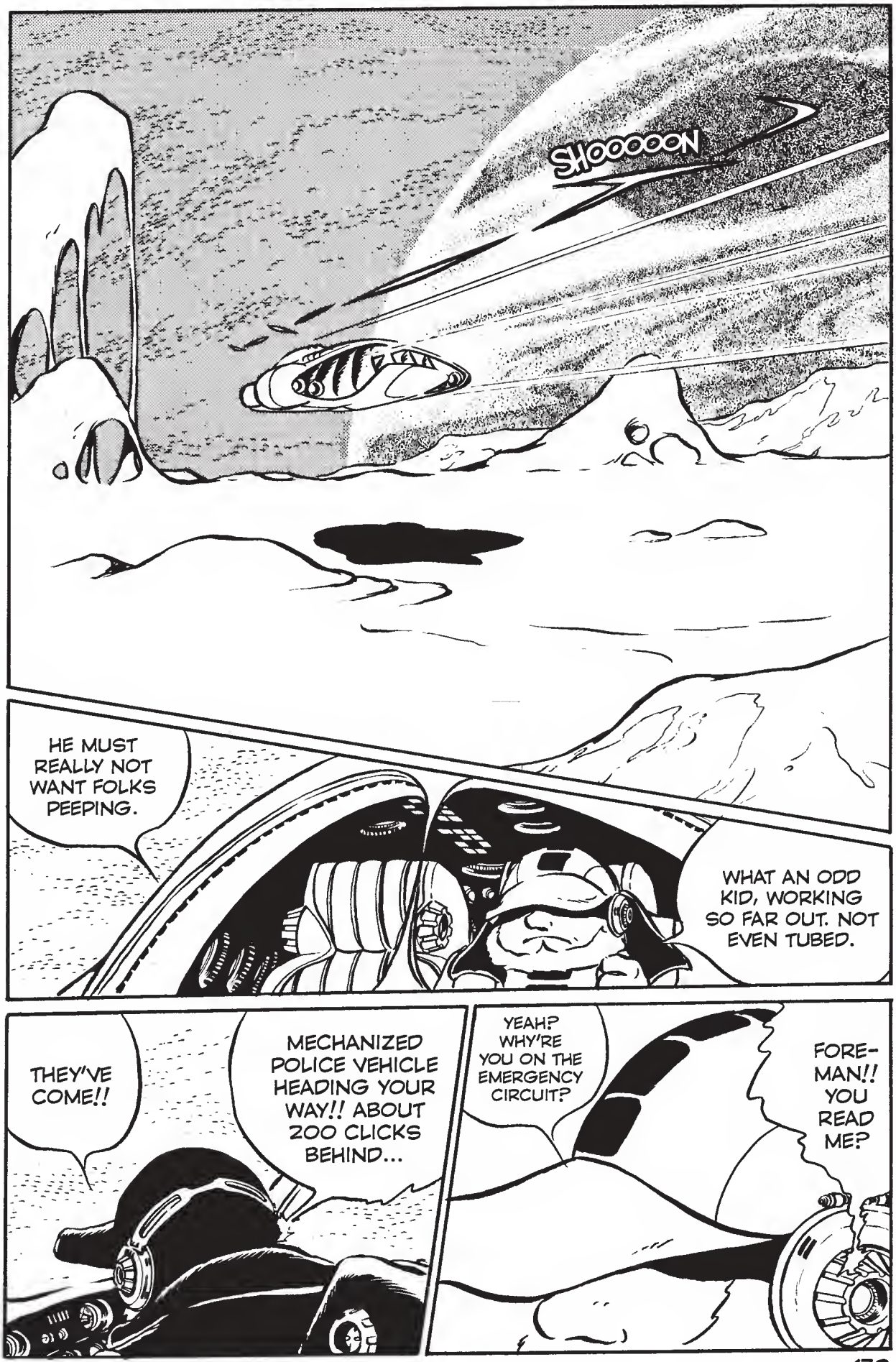

HER EYES SEEMED TO GREET ME WITH TEARS.
SEEING THE FIGUREHEAD DECORATING THE BOW, I FELT LIKE SHE WAS MY TRUE-BLOOD SISTER.
NOOOOOOZZ
QUEEN EMERALDAS WELCOMED ME IN...
NOOOOOOZZ
I STEPPED INSIDE THIS LIVING SHIP, HEARD HER HEARTBEAT, THRILLED TO HER HUM OF ENERGY—THE YOUNG SHIP'S SONG OF LIFE THAT WOULD PLAY UNTIL HER VERY END.

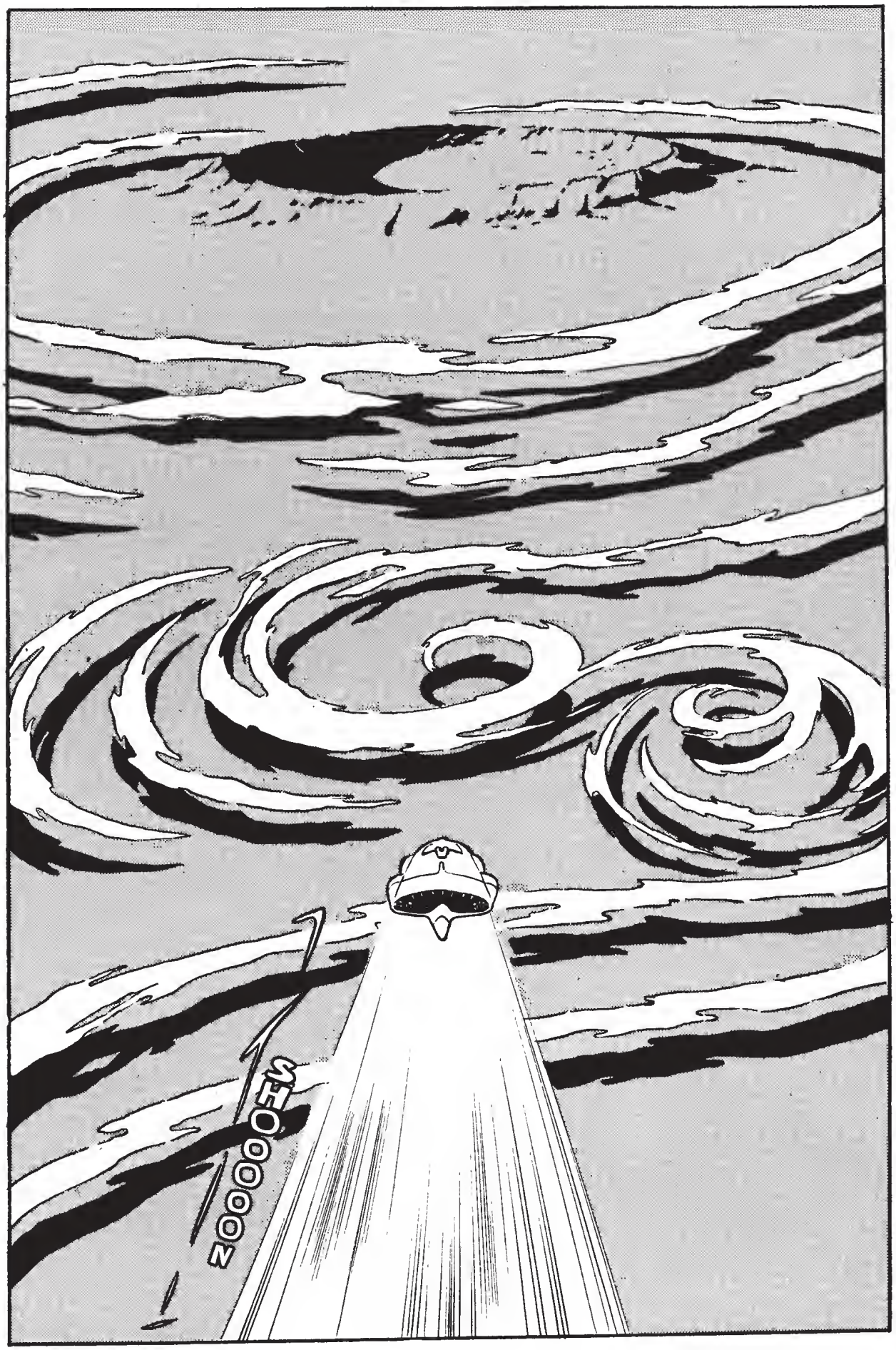
IT WAS MY FIRST TIME, YET I KNEW HER. I WALKED HER STRUCTURE UNERRINGLY.
I HAVE NO EXPLANATION OTHER THAN THAT THE QUEEN EMERALDAS AND I WERE BONDED BY SOME MYSTERIOUS DESTINY...

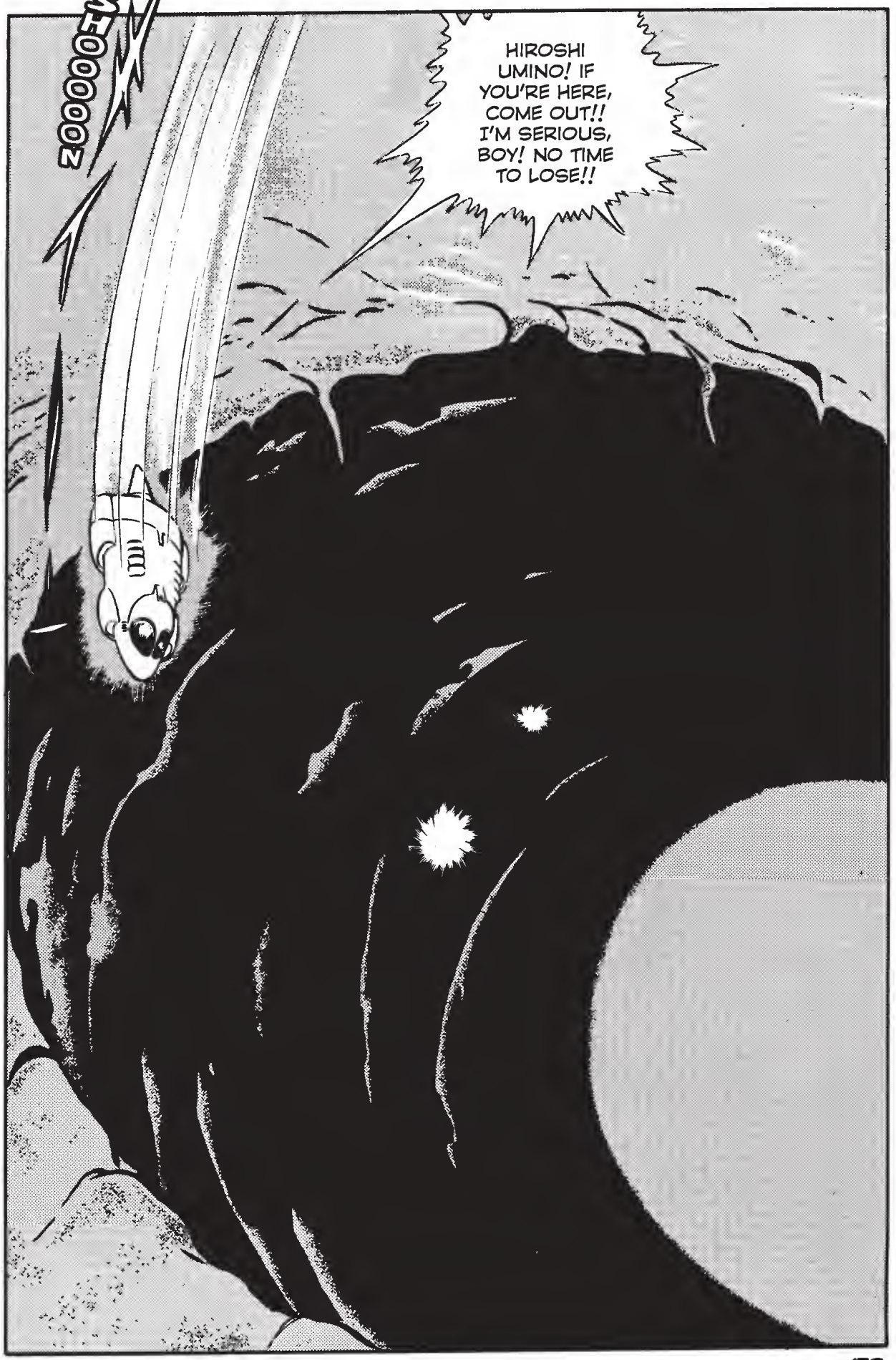
AND SO WE DEPARTED FOR THE OCEAN OF SPACE, HOLDING FAST AND SAFEGUARDING ONE ANOTHER...

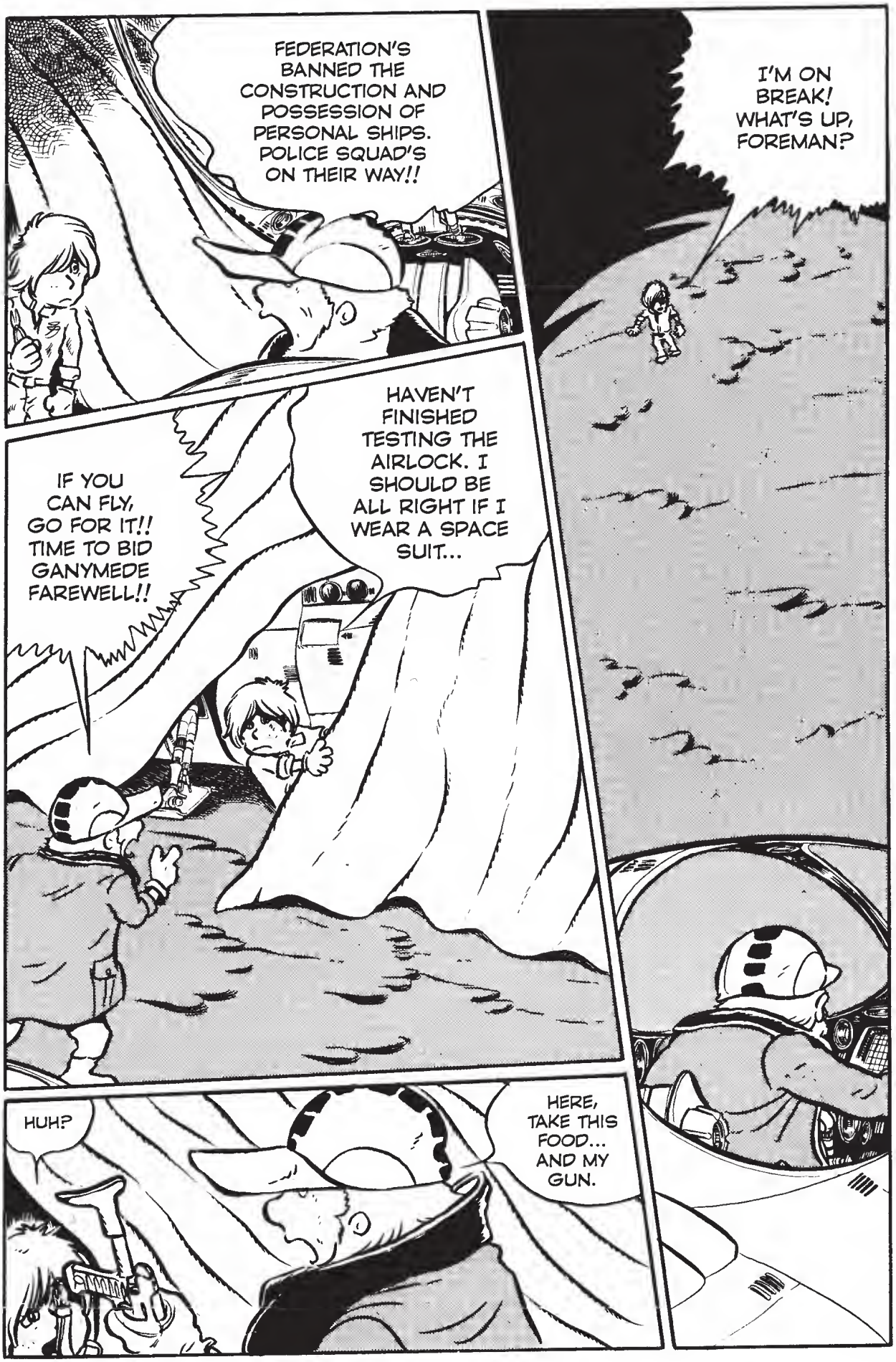
I HAVE NEVER TOLD A SOUL WHY I JOURNEY THROUGH SPACE, NOR WHAT I SEEK...
I AM EMERALDAS... THE WITCH OF THE SPACE-WAYS, WHOSE GOAL IS HIDDEN DEEP WITHIN HER HEART...

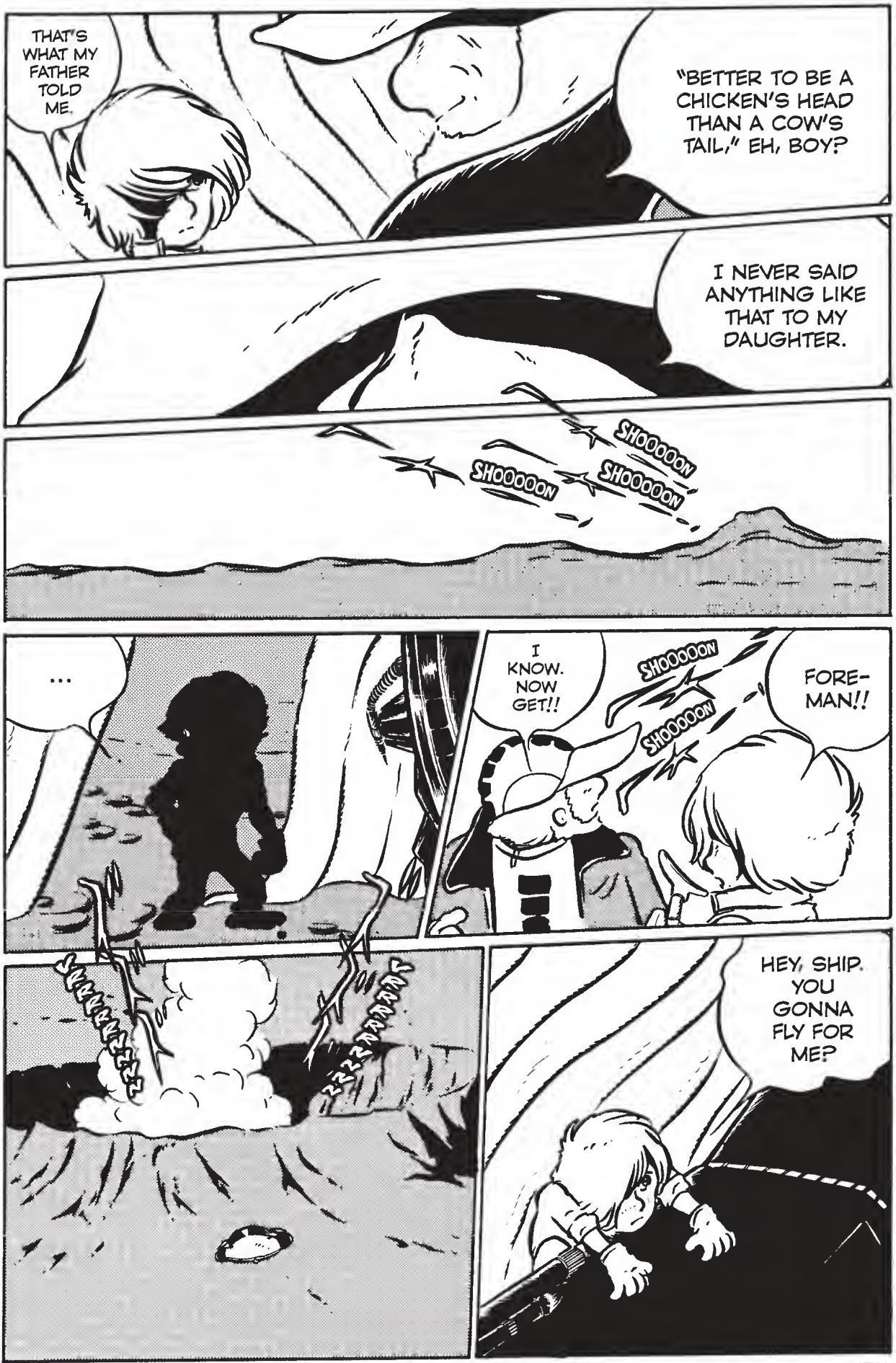

WORD IS HE RENTED A CRATER OUTSIDE A' TOWN. HE'S UP TO SOME-THING HUSH-HUSH...
HOW'S HIROSHI UMINO DOING? IN 2705-003? HE'S BEEN OFF WORK THE PAST FEW DAYS, RIGHT?
WHAT'S THAT?
NO IDEA. HE WON'T SHOW ANYONE WHAT HE'S DOING.
HE BUILDING A SHIP?
WELL... SOME COULDN'T BUILD ONE IN A HUNDRED YEARS. A GENIUS COULD KNOCK ONE TOGETHER IN 2-3 DAYS...
HOW LONG'S IT TAKE TO COBBLE TOGETHER A SHIP?
HMM... OH YEAH? ROGER.
SHOOOW
HERE'S HOPING UMINO HAS WHAT IT TAKES...
DEPENDS ON THEIR TALENT!!

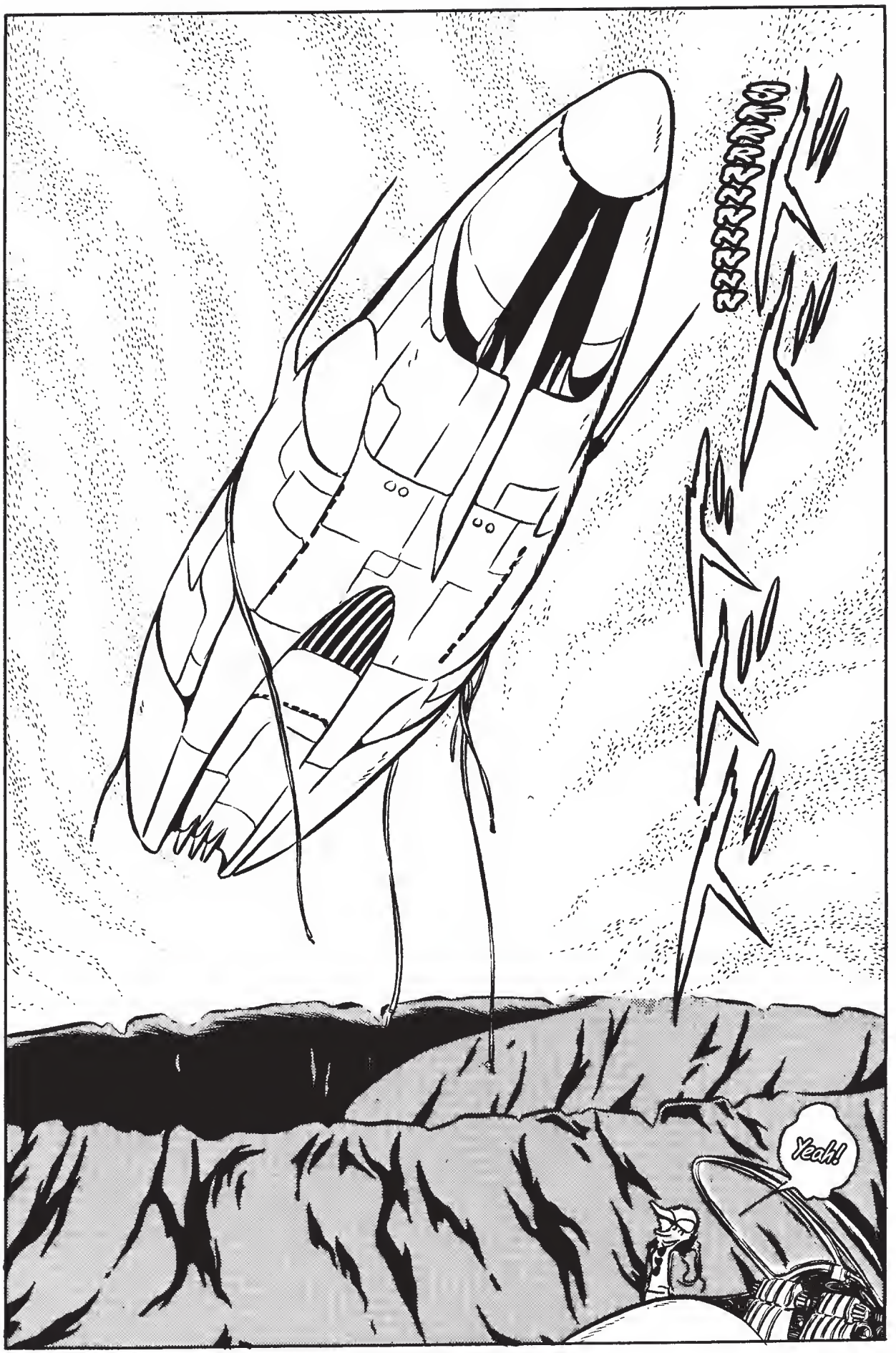

SHOOOOON
HE MUST REALLY NOT WANT FOLKS PEEPING.
WHAT AN ODD KID, WORKING SO FAR OUT. NOT EVEN TUBED.
THEY'VE COME!!
MECHANIZED POLICE VEHICLE HEADING YOUR WAY!! ABOUT 200 CLICKS BEHIND...
YEAH? WHY'RE YOU ON THE EMERGENCY CIRCUIT?
FORE-MAN!! YOU READ ME?


シュゴゴゴゴゴ


SHOOOOOZ
HIROSHI UMINO! IF YOU'RE HERE, COME OUT!! I'M SERIOUS, BOY! NO TIME TO LOSE!!

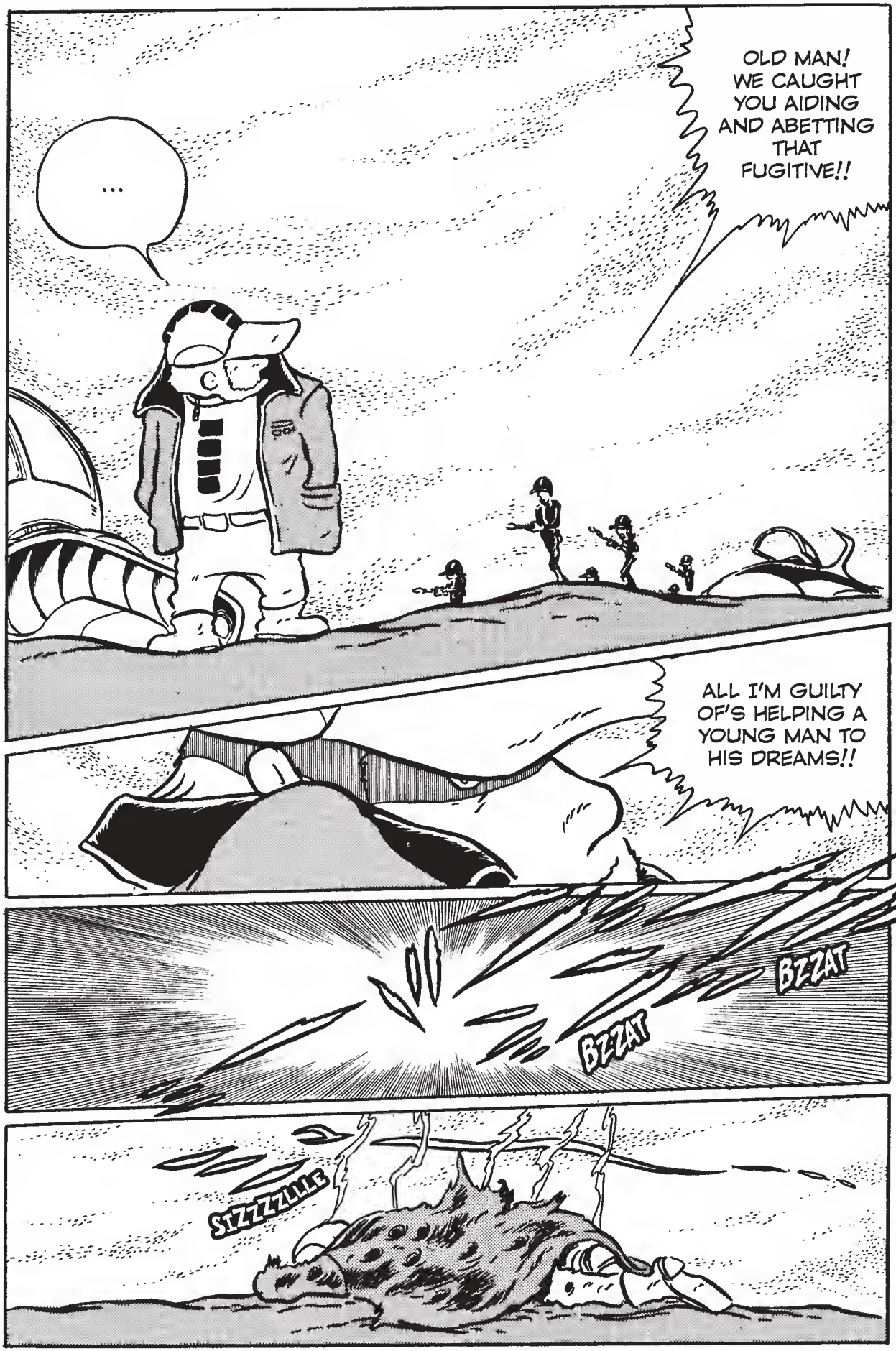

FEDERATION'S BANNED THE CONSTRUCTION AND POSSESSION OF PERSONAL SHIPS. POLICE SQUAD'S ON THEIR WAY!!
I'M ON BREAK! WHAT'S UP, FOREMAN?
HAVEN'T FINISHED TESTING THE AIRLOCK. I SHOULD BE ALL RIGHT IF I WEAR A SPACE SUIT...
IF YOU CAN FLY, GO FOR IT!! TIME TO BID GANYMEDE FAREWELL!!
HUH?
HERE, TAKE THIS FOOD... AND MY GUN.

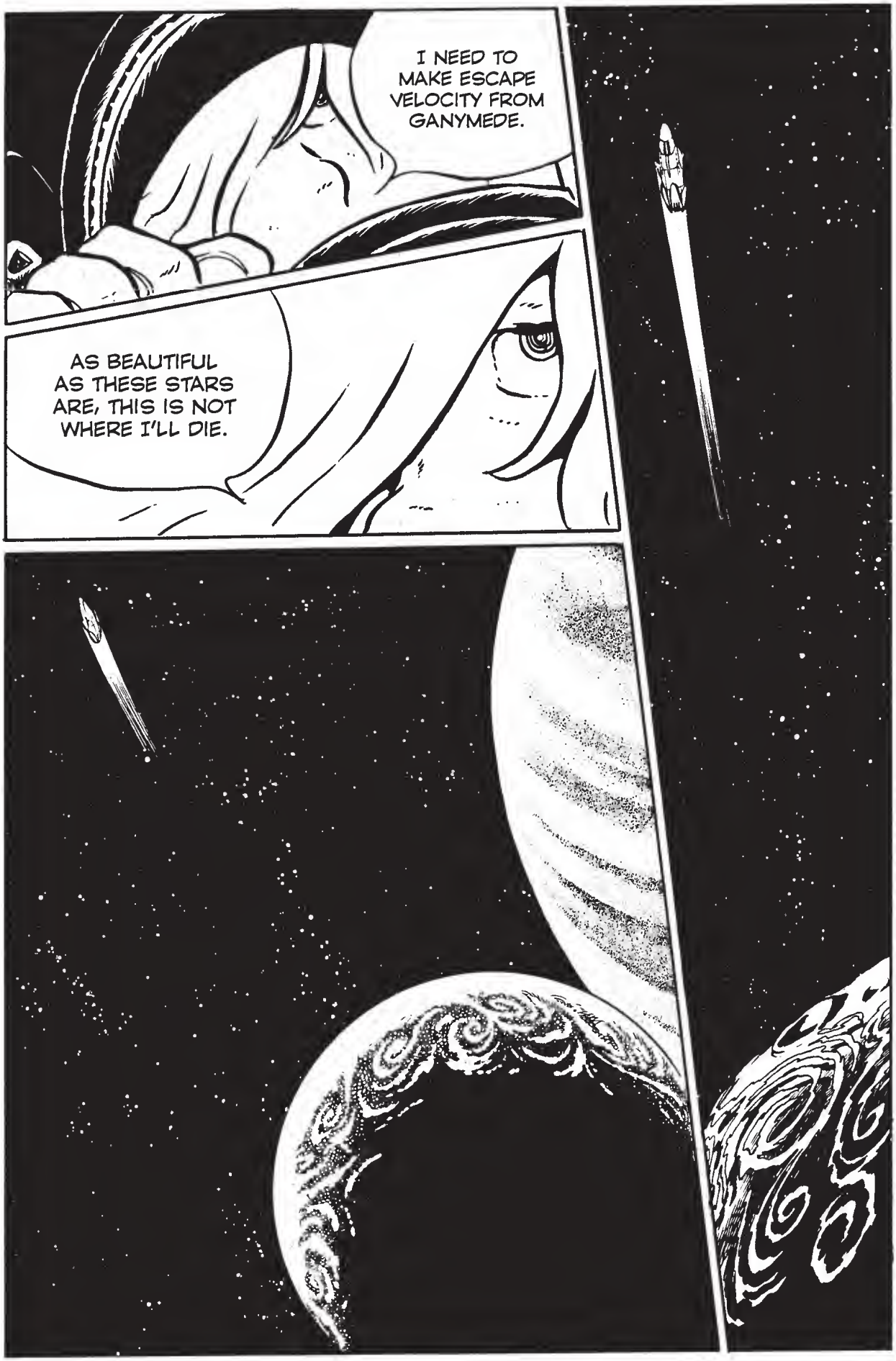

THAT'S WHAT MY FATHER TOLD ME.
"BETTER TO BE A CHICKEN'S HEAD THAN A COW'S TAIL," EH, BOY?
I NEVER SAID ANYTHING LIKE THAT TO MY DAUGHTER.
SHOOOOON
SHOOOOON
SHOOOOON
...
I KNOW. NOW GET!!
SHOOOOON
SHOOOOON
FORE-MAN!!
VRRRRRRR
ZZZZZZZZZ
HEY, SHIP. YOU GONNA FLY FOR ME?


Yeah!

GUUUUUUUUU
YOU IN THE SCRATCH-BUILT SHIP! HALT!!
CAN YOU HEAR US IN THAT THING?! STOP!!

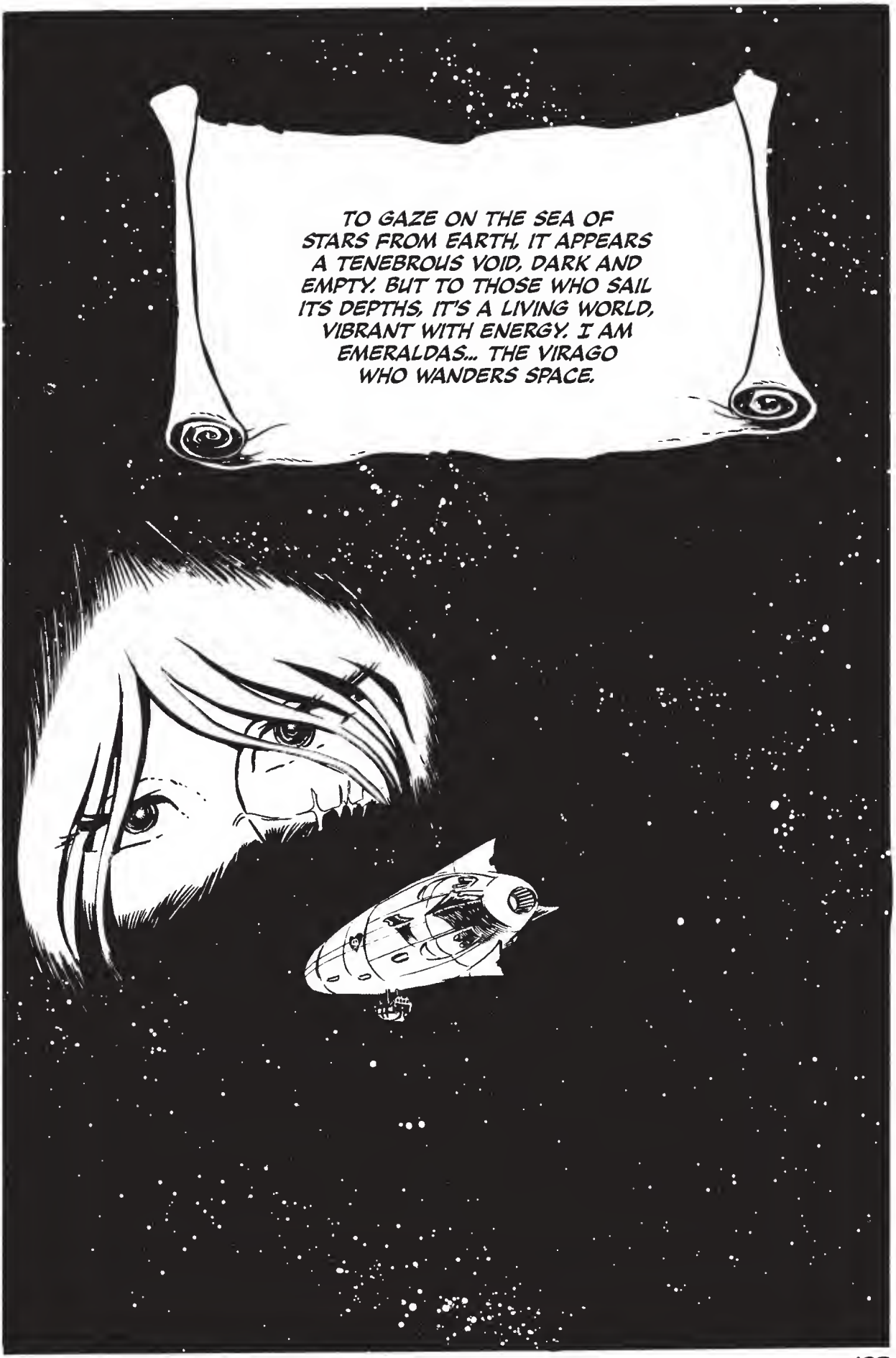
SKRRNNNNNNN
SOME-
THING
BROKE
OFF!
KRICK
POW
CHUG
CRAP!
CHUG
POWN


...
OLD MAN! WE CAUGHT YOU AIDING AND ABETTING THAT FUGITIVE!!
ALL I'M GUILTY OF'S HELPING A YOUNG MAN TO HIS DREAMS!!
BZZAT
BZZAT
SIZZZLLLE


I NEED TO MAKE ESCAPE VELOCITY FROM GANYMEDE.
AS BEAUTIFUL AS THESE STARS ARE, THIS IS NOT WHERE I'LL DIE.

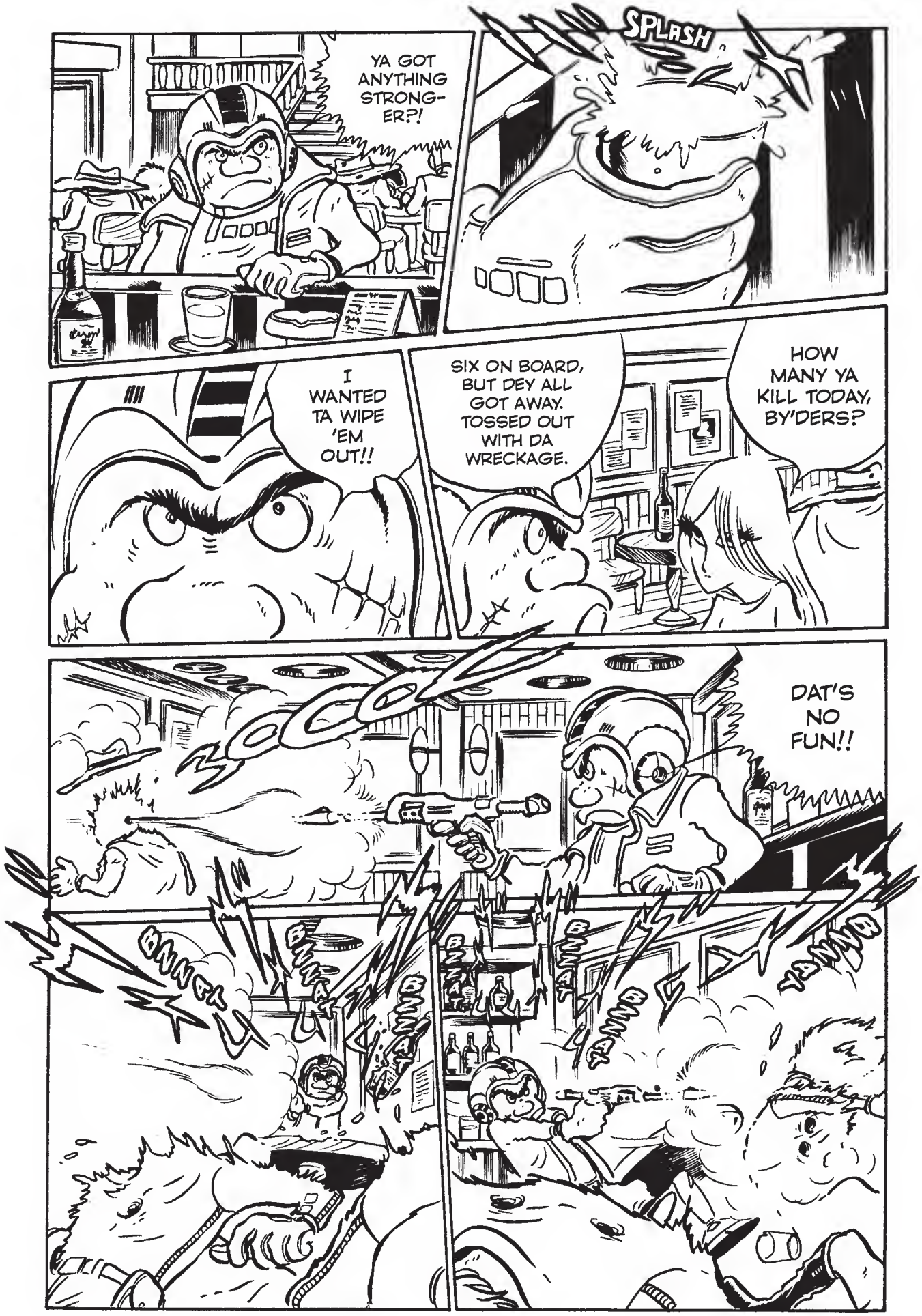
THIS IS WHERE I'LL LIVE!!

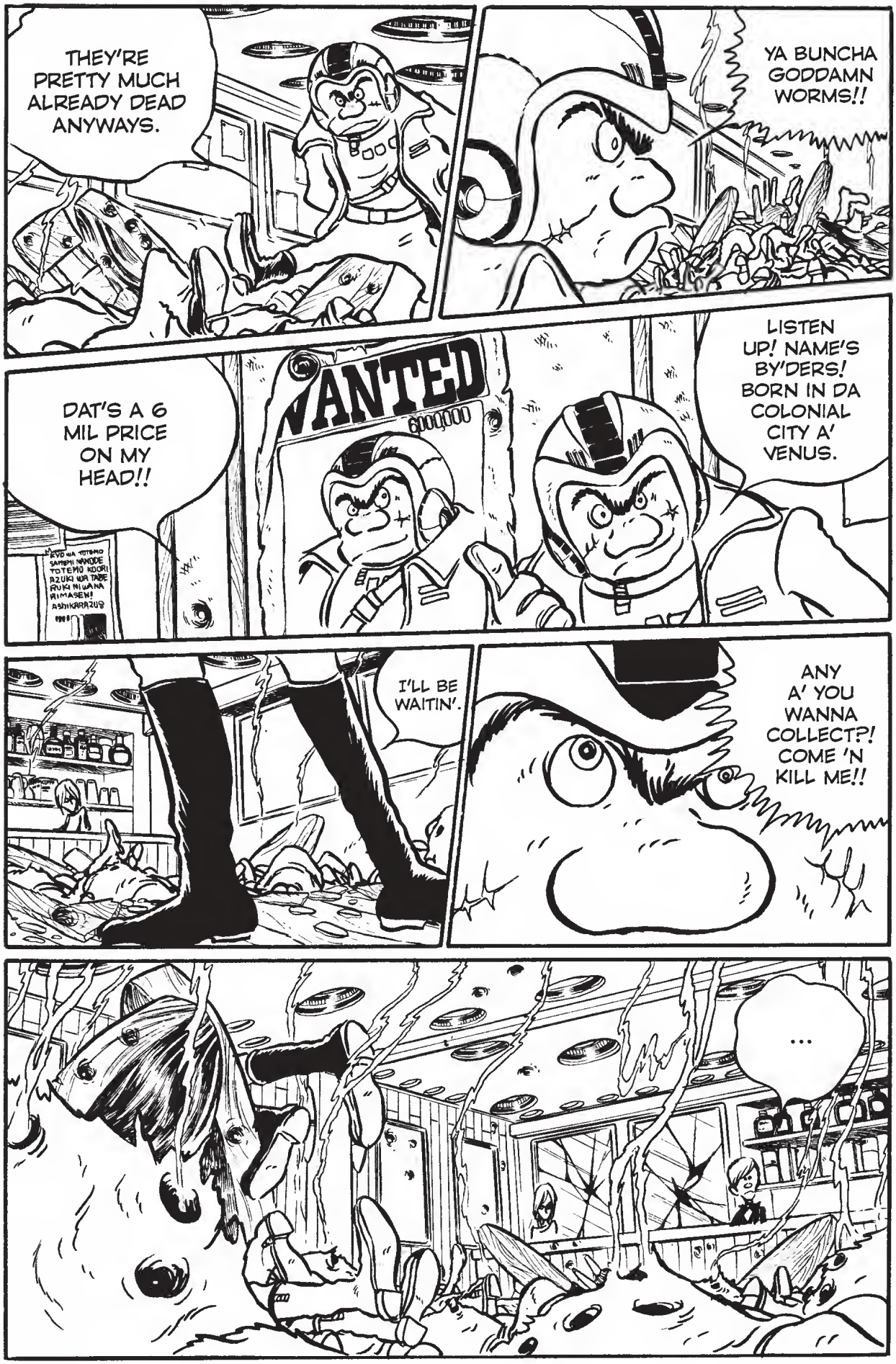
WHAT? WHERE AM I?
GRRRRRNNNNN
DAMN! THE JUPITER TRASH VORTEX!
RRRRUMBLLLE
...
OR JUST WHAT I NEEDED... SPARE PARTS...!

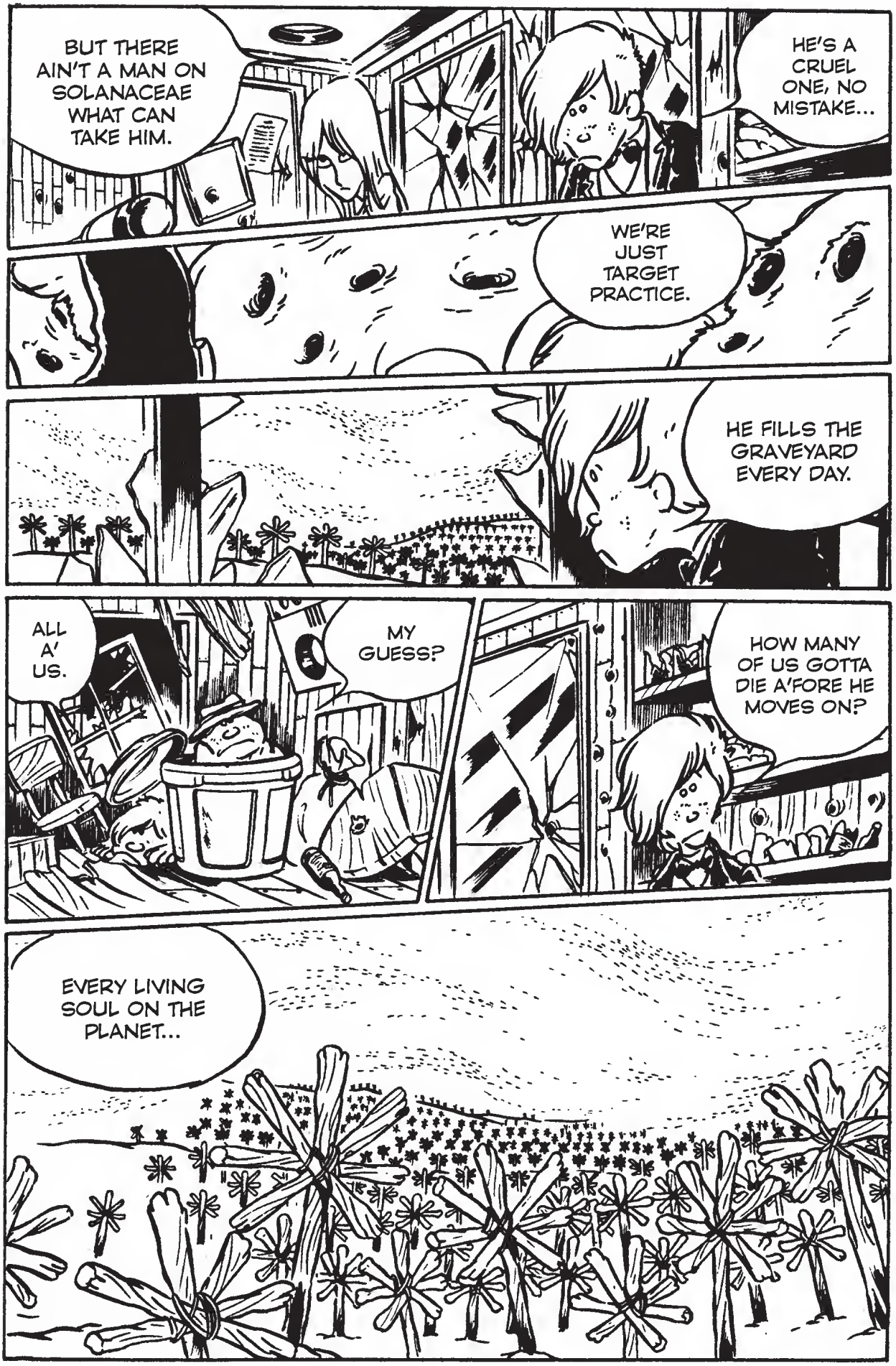

TO GAZE ON THE SEA OF STARS FROM EARTH, IT APPEARS A TENEBROUS VOID, DARK AND EMPTY. BUT TO THOSE WHO SAIL ITS DEPTHS, IT'S A LIVING WORLD, VIBRANT WITH ENERGY. I AM EMERALDAS... THE VIRAGO WHO WANDERS SPACE.

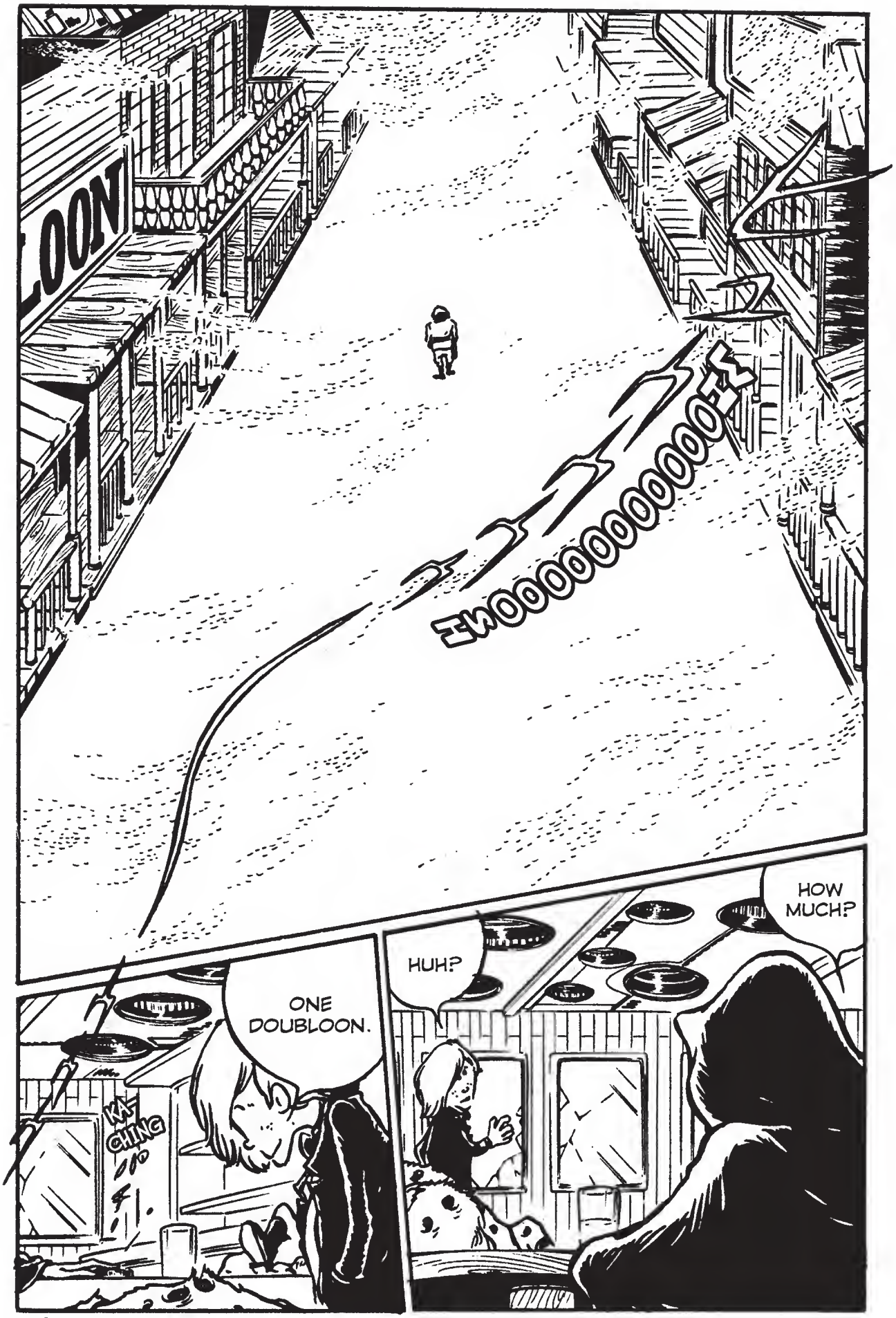
KA-BOOM
H-OOOOOM-

DAMN... STILL SOME CHUNKS LEFT OVER.
I WANTED TA DESTROY IT COMPLETELY.


YA GOT ANYTHING STRONGER?!
SPLASH
I WANTED TA WIPE 'EM OUT!!
SIX ON BOARD, BUT DEY ALL GOT AWAY. TOSSED OUT WITH DA WRECKAGE.
HOW MANY YA KILL TODAY, BY'DERS?
DAT'S NO FUN!!
BNNGH
BNNGH
BNNGH
BNNGH
BNNGH


THEY'RE PRETTY MUCH ALREADY DEAD ANYWAYS.
YA BUNCHA GODDAMN WORMS!!
WANTED
600,000
DAT'S A 6 MIL PRICE ON MY HEAD!!
LISTEN UP! NAME'S BY'DERS! BORN IN DA COLONIAL CITY A' VENUS.
I'LL BE WAITIN'.
ANY A' YOU WANNA COLLECT?! COME 'N KILL ME!!
...


BUT THERE AIN'T A MAN ON SOLANACEAE WHAT CAN TAKE HIM.
HE'S A CRUEL ONE, NO MISTAKE...
WE'RE JUST TARGET PRACTICE.
HE FILLS THE GRAVEYARD EVERY DAY.
ALL A' US.
MY GUESS?
HOW MANY OF US GOTTA DIE A'FORE HE MOVES ON?
EVERY LIVING SOUL ON THE PLANET...


LOON
WOOO

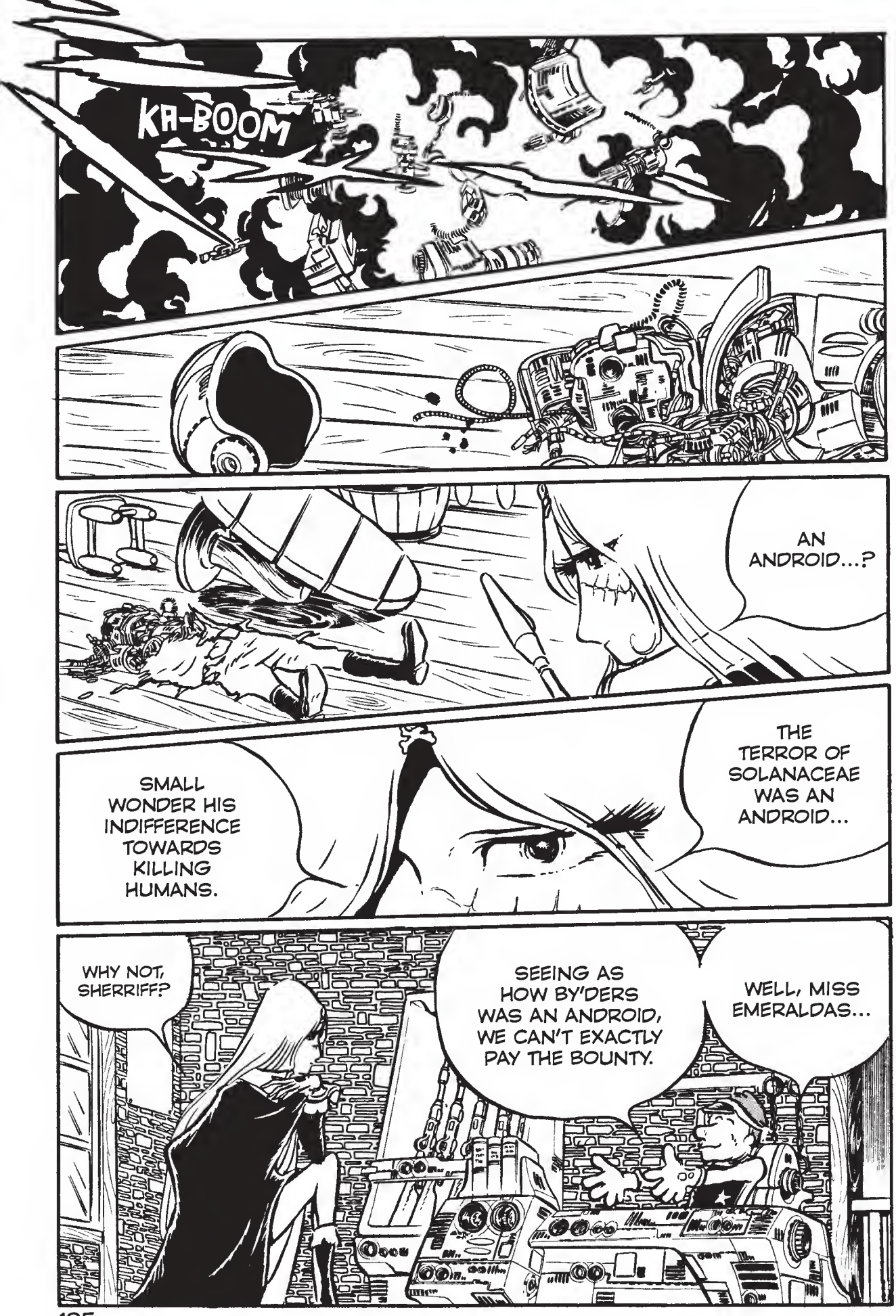
WANTED
RRRRIP
WANTED
HAH!
AH!
AH!
DON'T DO IT! JUSS PUT IT BACK LIKE IT WAS, OR...

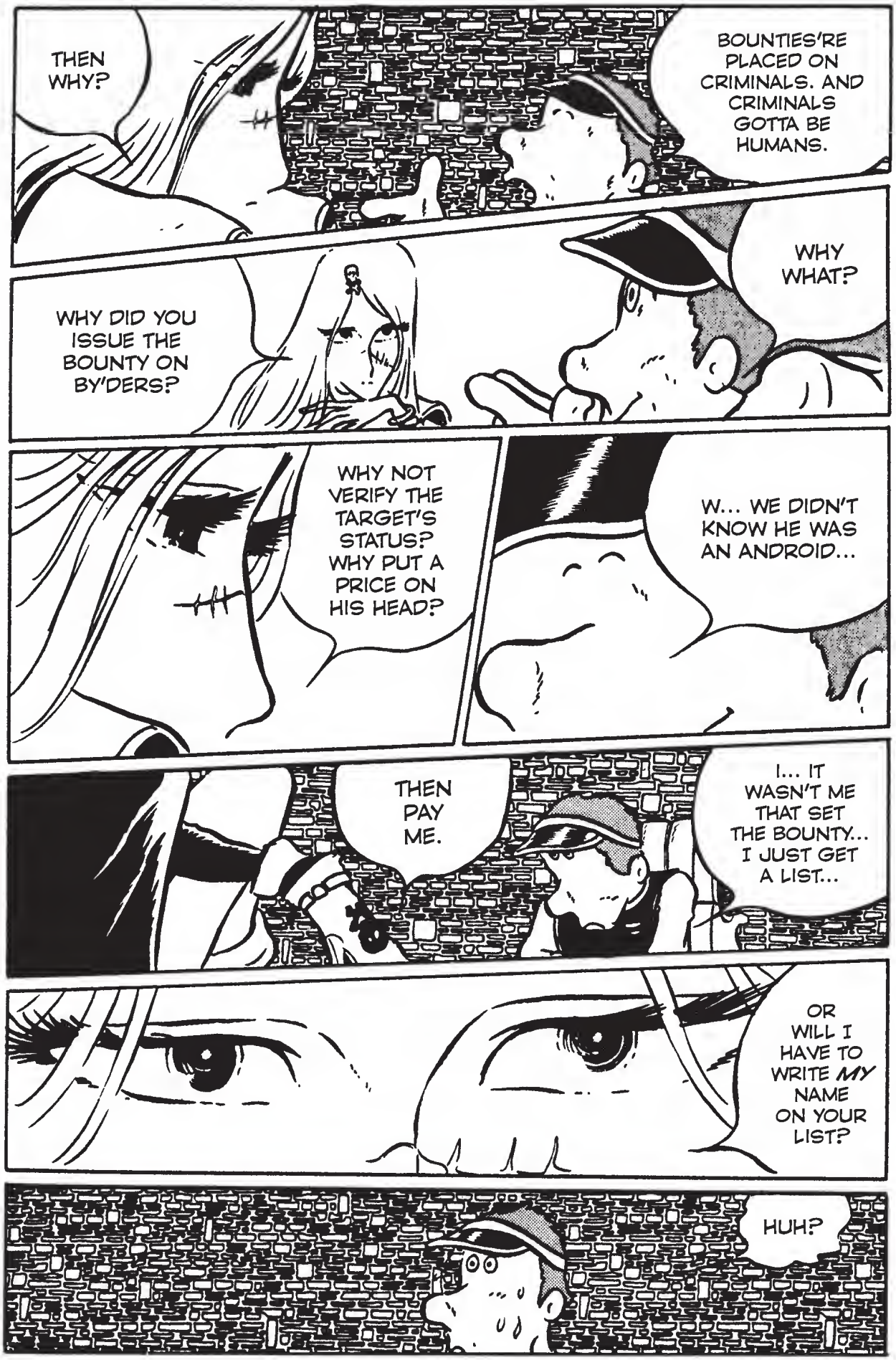
Emeraldas!!
BAR

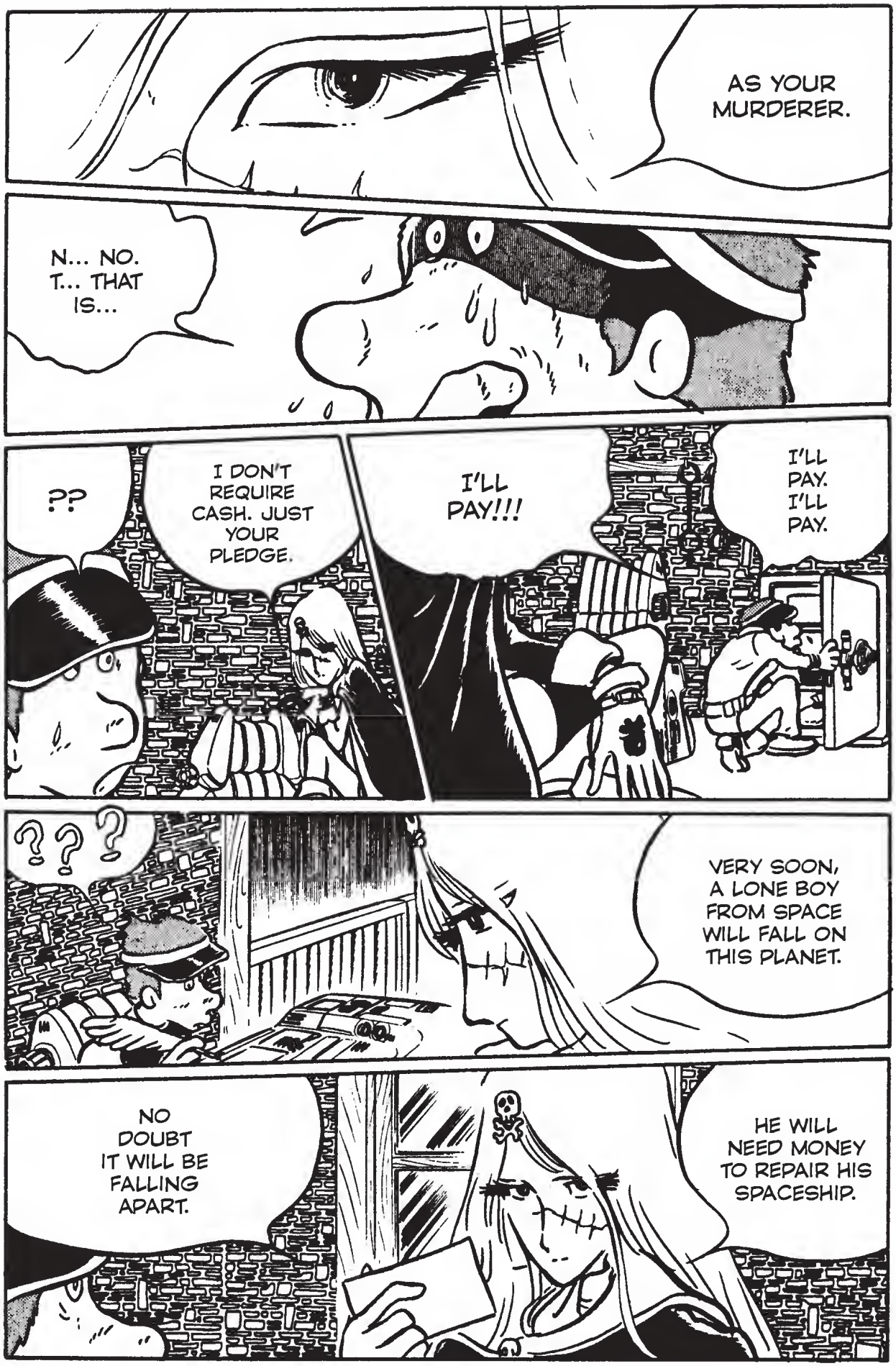
S... SOUTH HOTEL.
WHERE'S SHE STAYING?!
EMERALDAS? WHO DA HELL'S DAT?
SHE'S DEAD!!
BY'DERS DON'T CARE ABOUT ANYONE BUT HIMSELF.
WHO'DA THOUGHT THERE WAS A GUY WHAT DIDN'T KNOW EMERALDAS!
NOOOOOOOOOOOO!
South Hotel
HOTEL
HOTEL

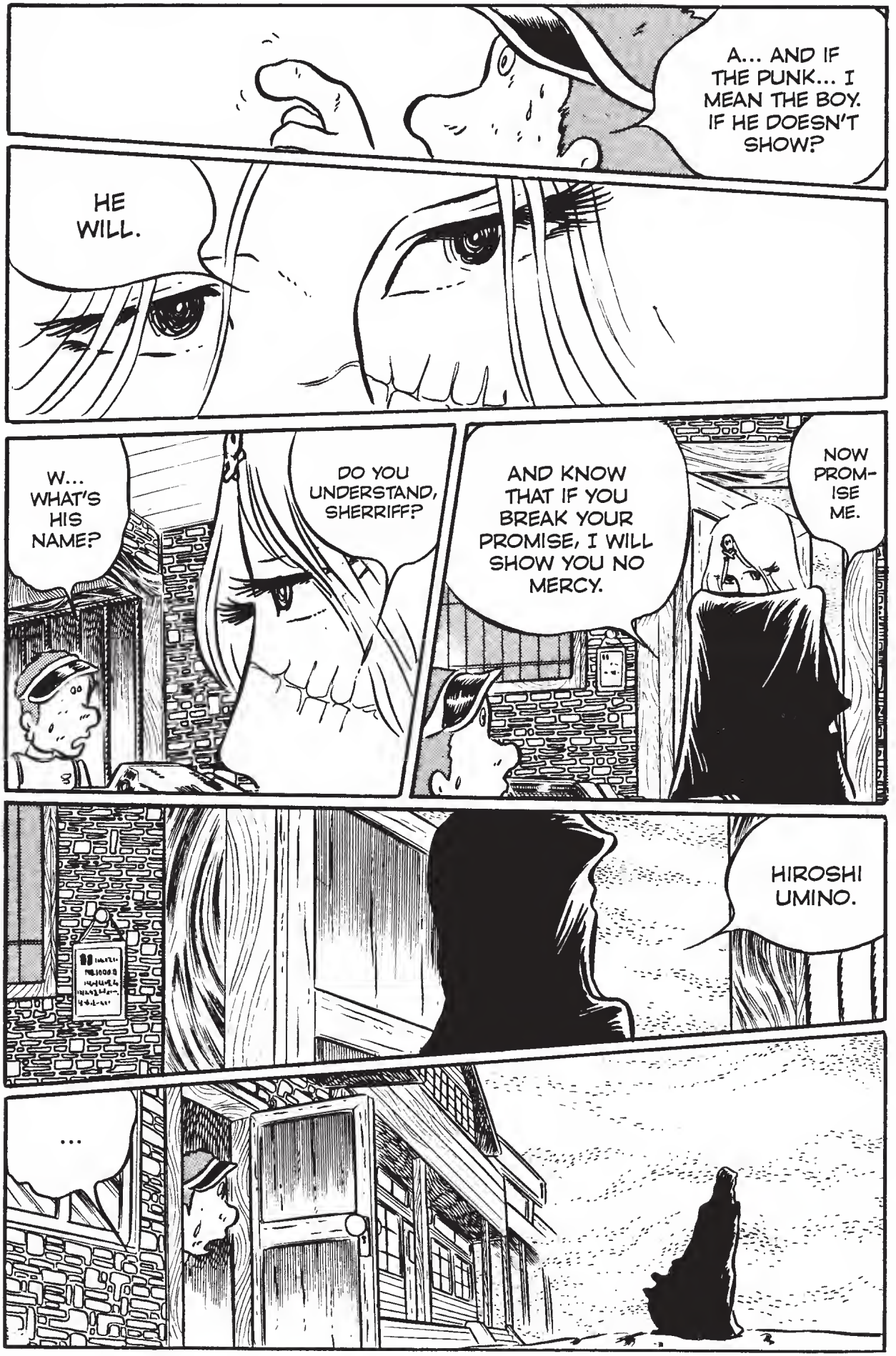
YOU DAWDLIN'? WANNA DIE TOO?!
BRING OUT DIS WITCH EMER-ALDAS!!
WHAM
SMACK
WHAT?
DESK
!!

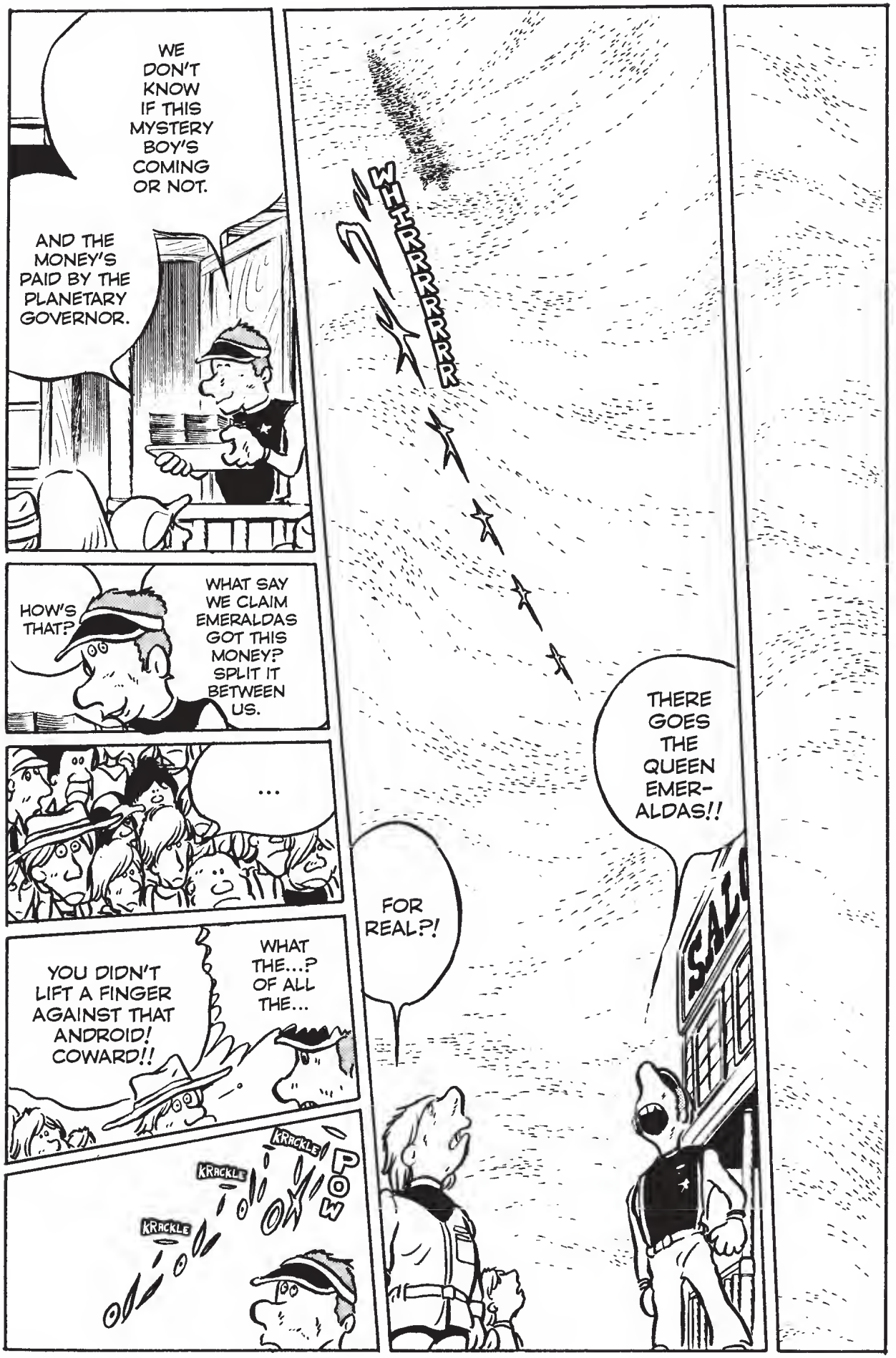
ZWARK

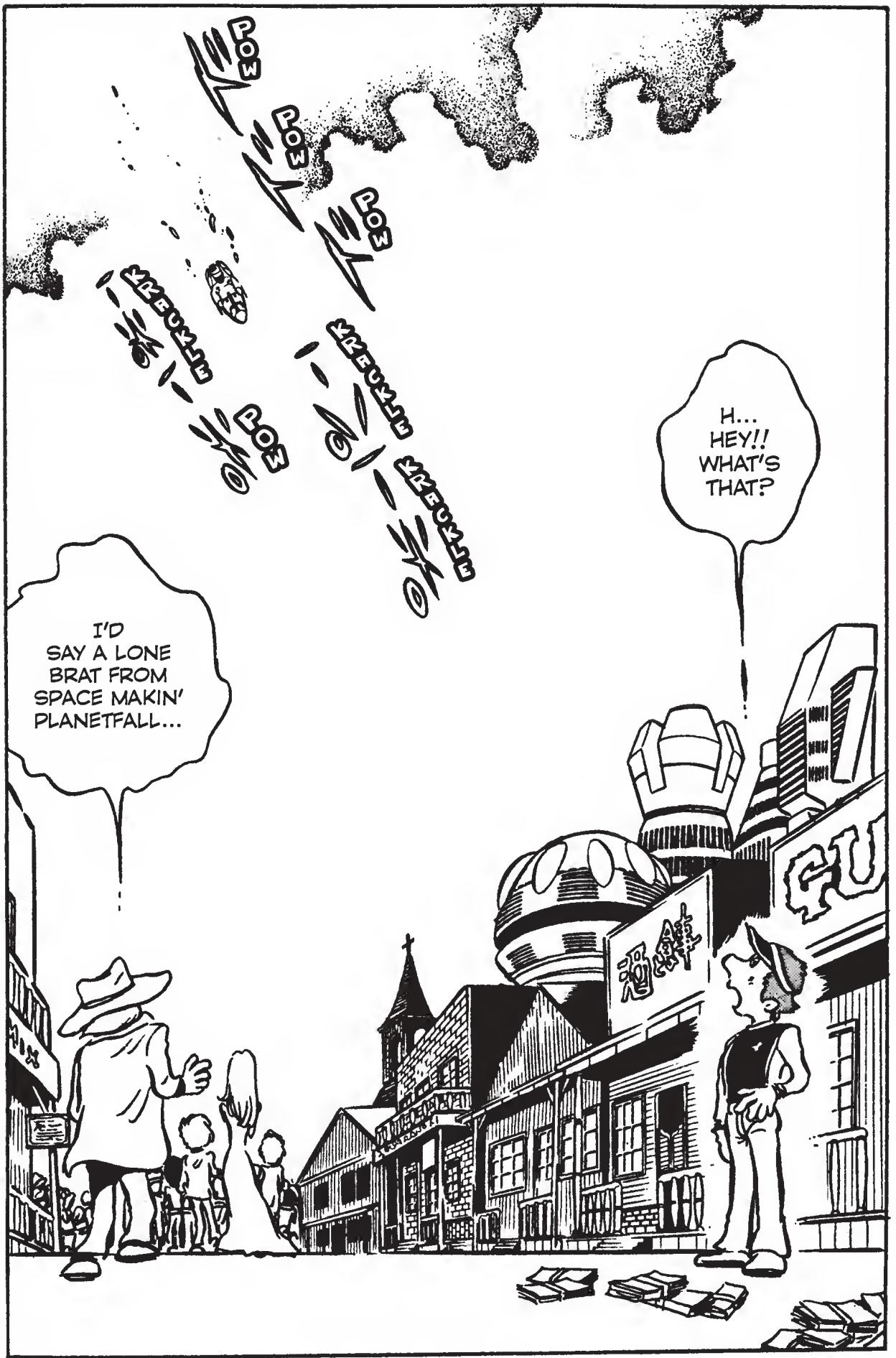

KA-BOOM
AN ANDROID...?
THE TERROR OF SOLANACEAE WAS AN ANDROID...
SMALL WONDER HIS INDIFFERENCE TOWARDS KILLING HUMANS.
WHY NOT, SHERRIFF?
SEEING AS HOW BY'DERS WAS AN ANDROID, WE CAN'T EXACTLY PAY THE BOUNTY.
WELL, MISS EMERALDAS...


THEN WHY?
BOUNTIES'RE PLACED ON CRIMINALS. AND CRIMINALS GOTTA BE HUMANS.
WHY WHAT?
WHY DID YOU ISSUE THE BOUNTY ON BY'DERS?
WHY NOT VERIFY THE TARGET'S STATUS? WHY PUT A PRICE ON HIS HEAD?
W... WE DIDN'T KNOW HE WAS AN ANDROID...
THEN PAY ME.
I... IT WASN'T ME THAT SET THE BOUNTY... I JUST GET A LIST...
OR WILL I HAVE TO WRITE *MY* NAME ON YOUR LIST?
HUH?


AS YOUR MURDERER.
N... NO. T... THAT IS...
??
I DON'T REQUIRE CASH. JUST YOUR PLEDGE.
I'LL PAY!!!
I'LL PAY. I'LL PAY.
VERY SOON, A LONE BOY FROM SPACE WILL FALL ON THIS PLANET.
NO DOUBT IT WILL BE FALLING APART.
HE WILL NEED MONEY TO REPAIR HIS SPACESHIP.

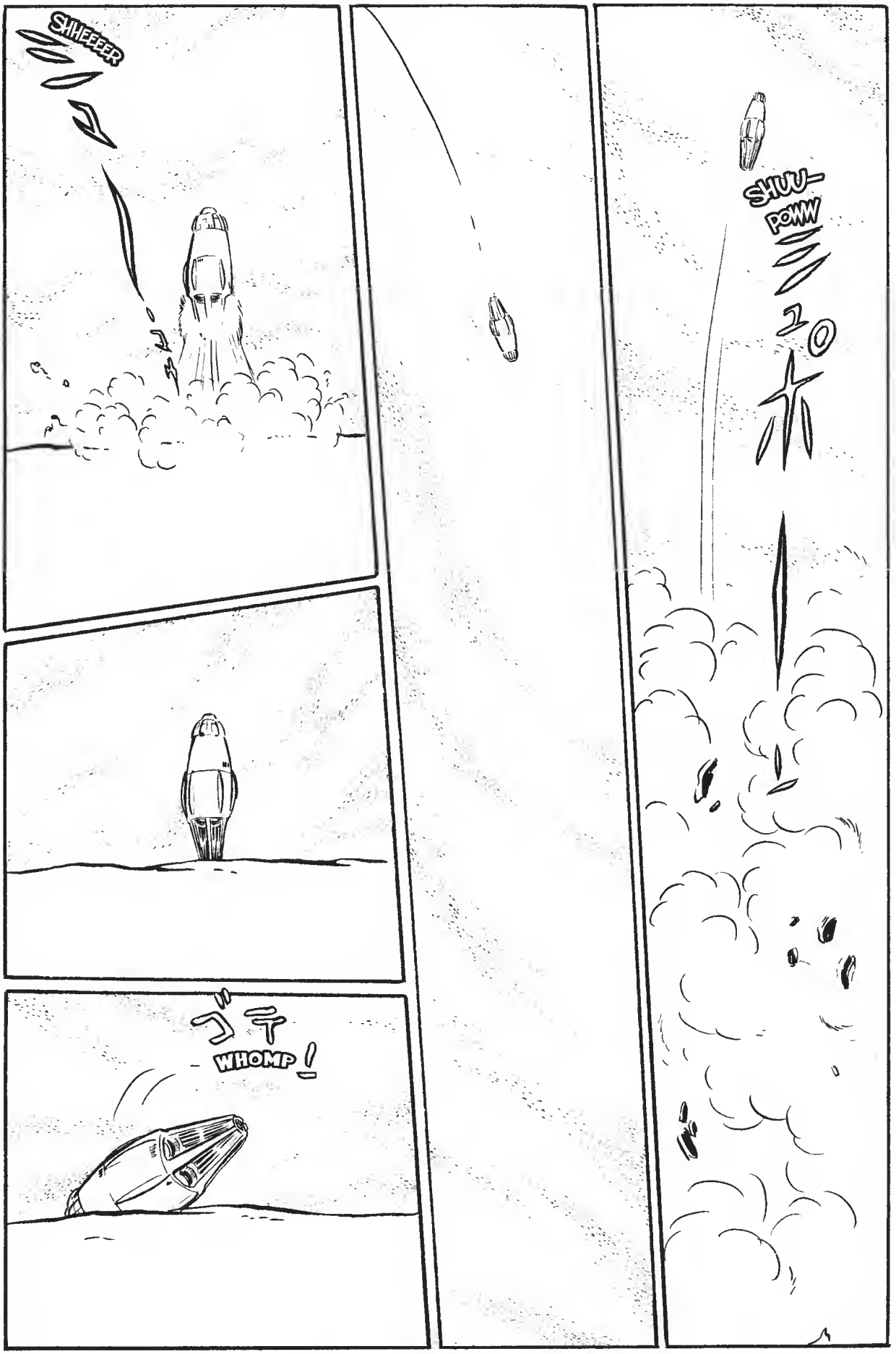

A... AND IF THE PUNK... I MEAN THE BOY. IF HE DOESN'T SHOW?
HE WILL.
W... WHAT'S HIS NAME?
DO YOU UNDERSTAND, SHERRIFF?
AND KNOW THAT IF YOU BREAK YOUR PROMISE, I WILL SHOW YOU NO MERCY.
NOW PROM-ISE ME.
HIROSHI UMINO.
...

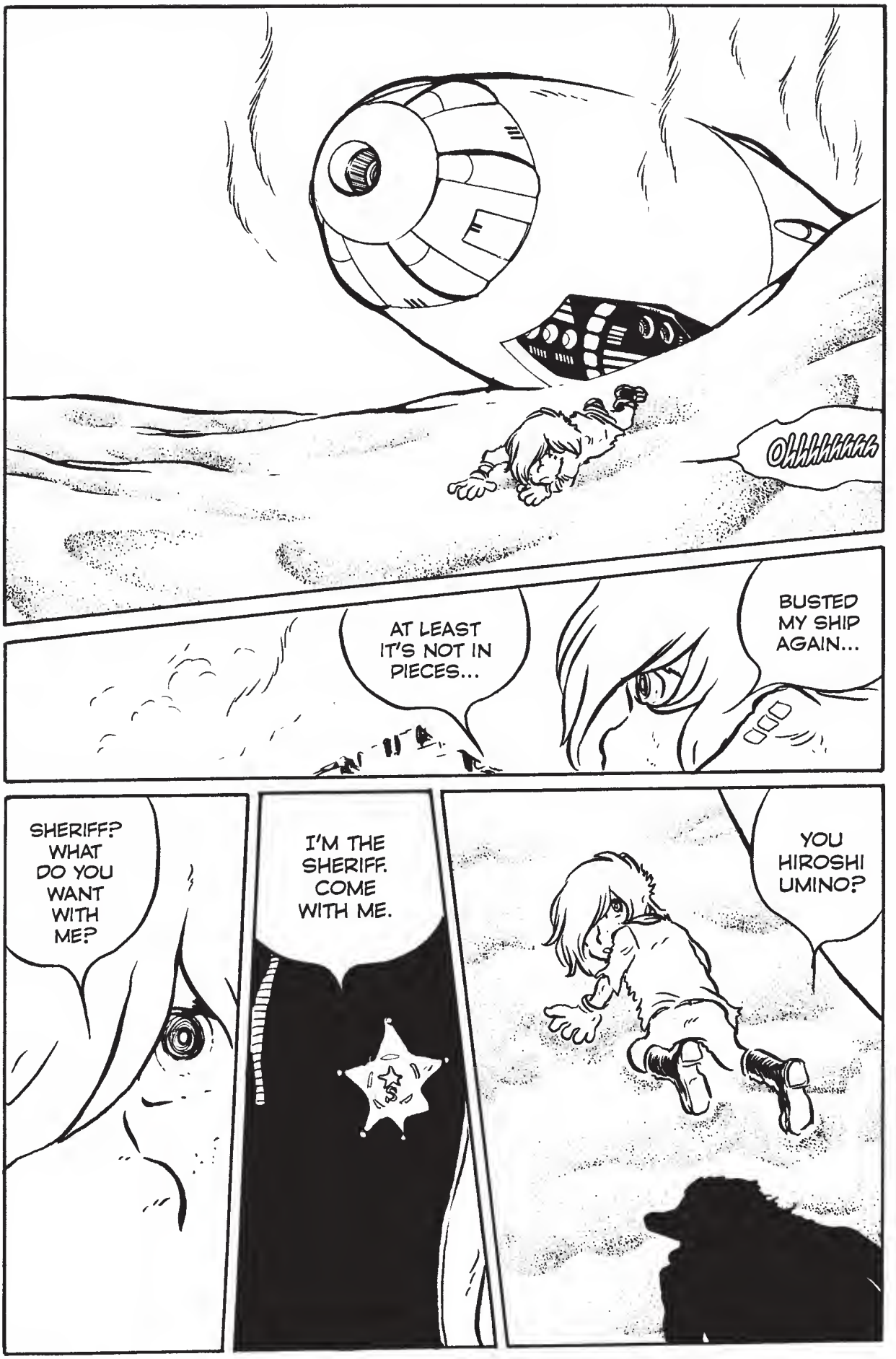

WE DON'T KNOW IF THIS MYSTERY BOY'S COMING OR NOT.
AND THE MONEY'S PAID BY THE PLANETARY GOVERNOR.
WHIRRRRRRR
HOW'S THAT?
WHAT SAY WE CLAIM EMERALDAS GOT THIS MONEY? SPLIT IT BETWEEN US.
...
YOU DIDN'T LIFT A FINGER AGAINST THAT ANDROID! COWARD!!
WHAT THE...? OF ALL THE...
KRRACKLE
KRRACKLE
KRRACKLE
POW
FOR REAL?!
THERE GOES THE QUEEN EMER-ALDAS!!

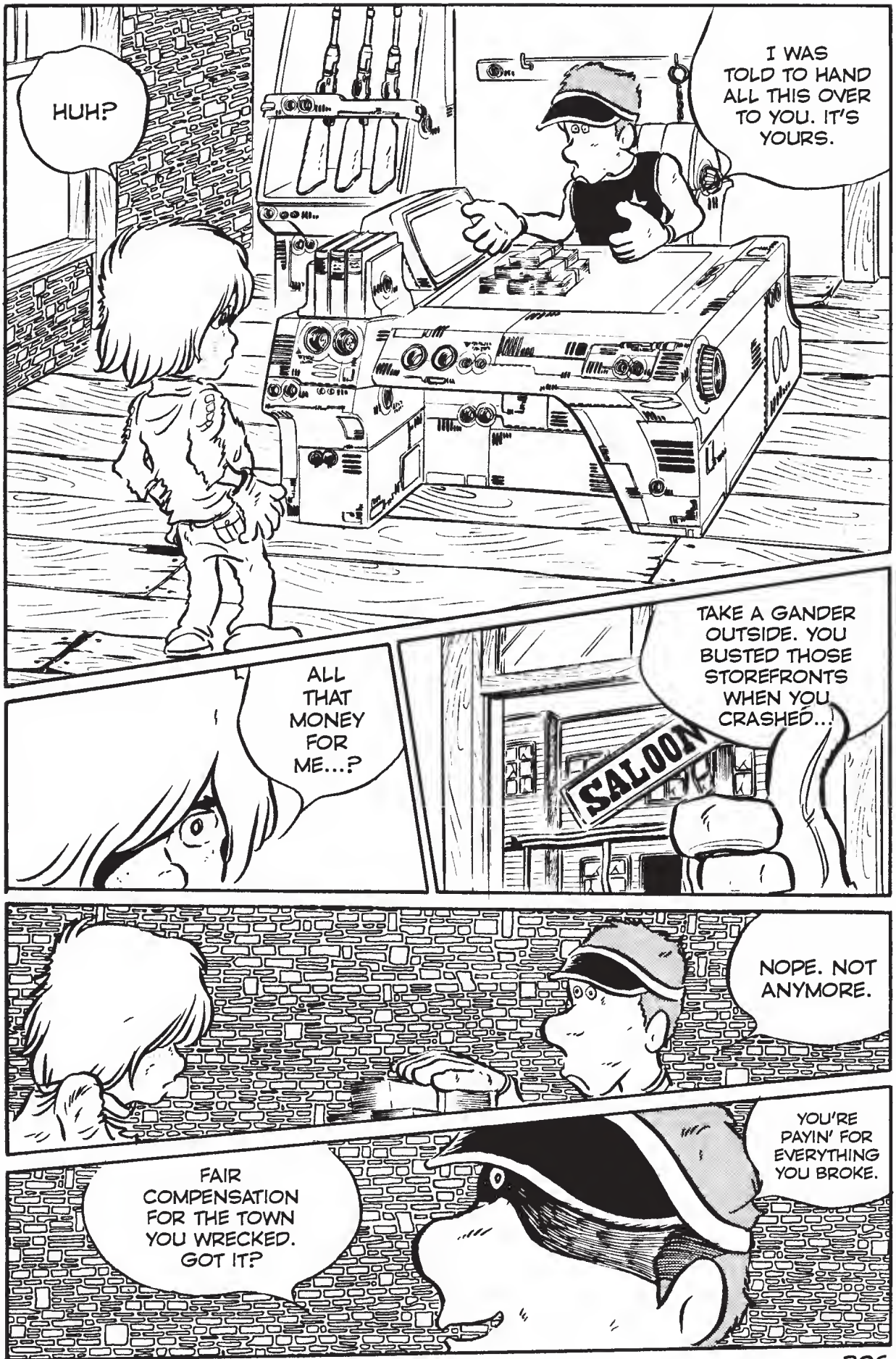

POW
POW
POW
KREUKLIN
KREUKLIN
KREUKLIN
POW
I'D SAY A LONE BRAT FROM SPACE MAKIN' PLANETFALL...
H... HEY!! WHAT'S THAT?

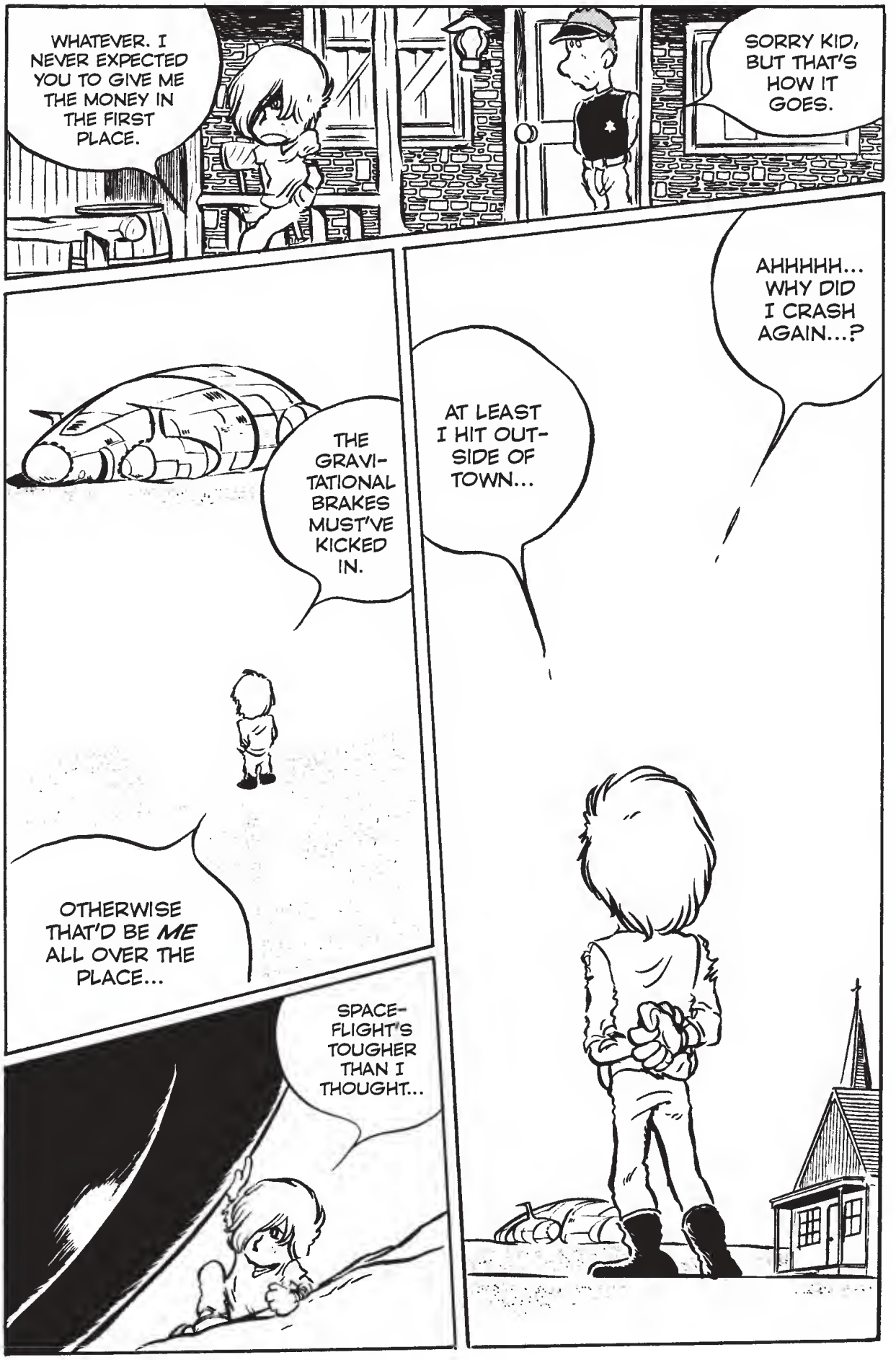
HOME. IF THAT IS WHAT PEOPLE CALL THE PLACE WHERE THEY WERE BORN AND RAISED, THEN MY HOME IS SPACE...

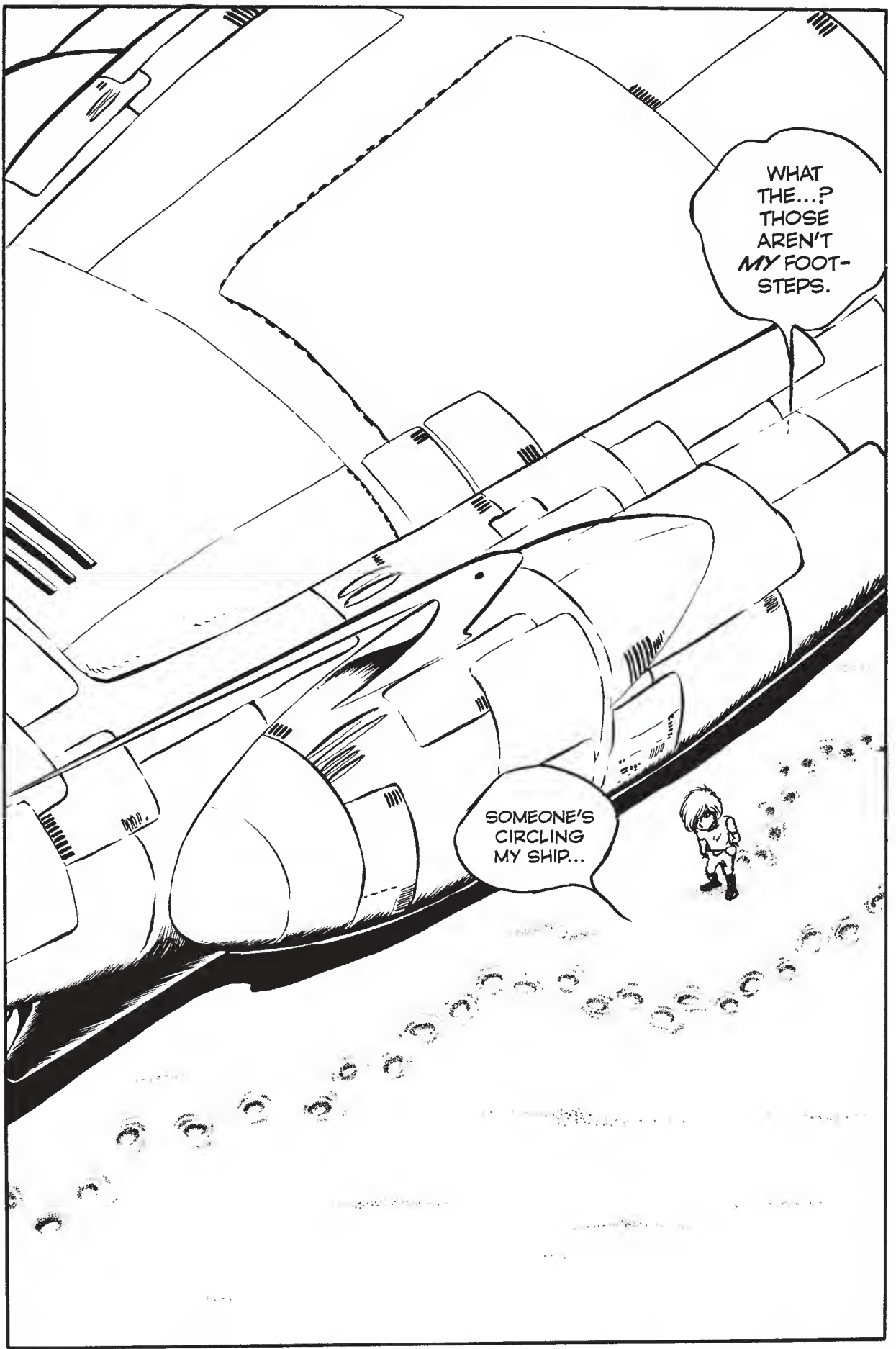
BA-DOOOOOMM
ズズズズズズ
RWWOOORRRR

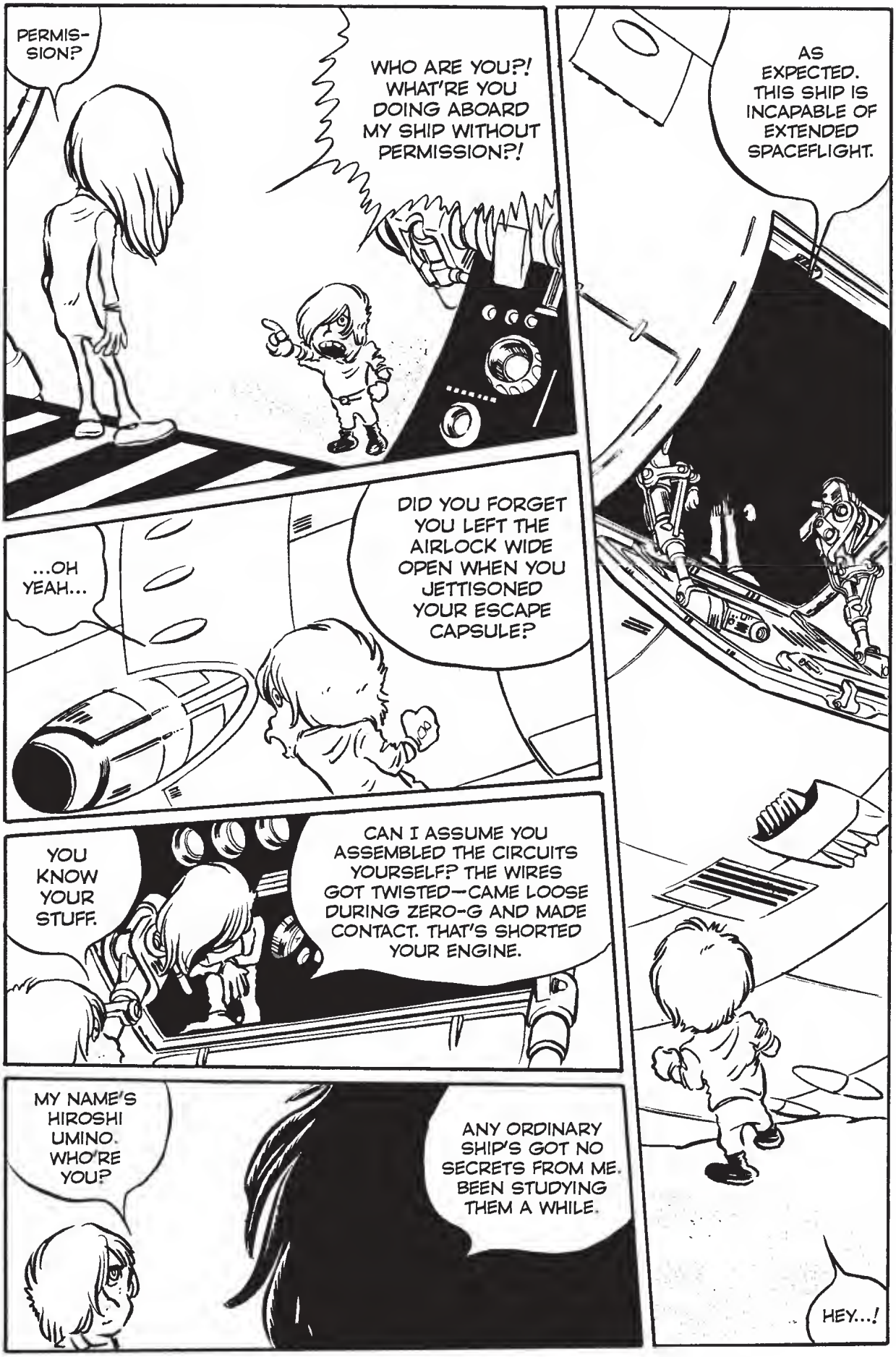

SHHEEEER
SHUU-
POWW
ゴテ
WHOMP!

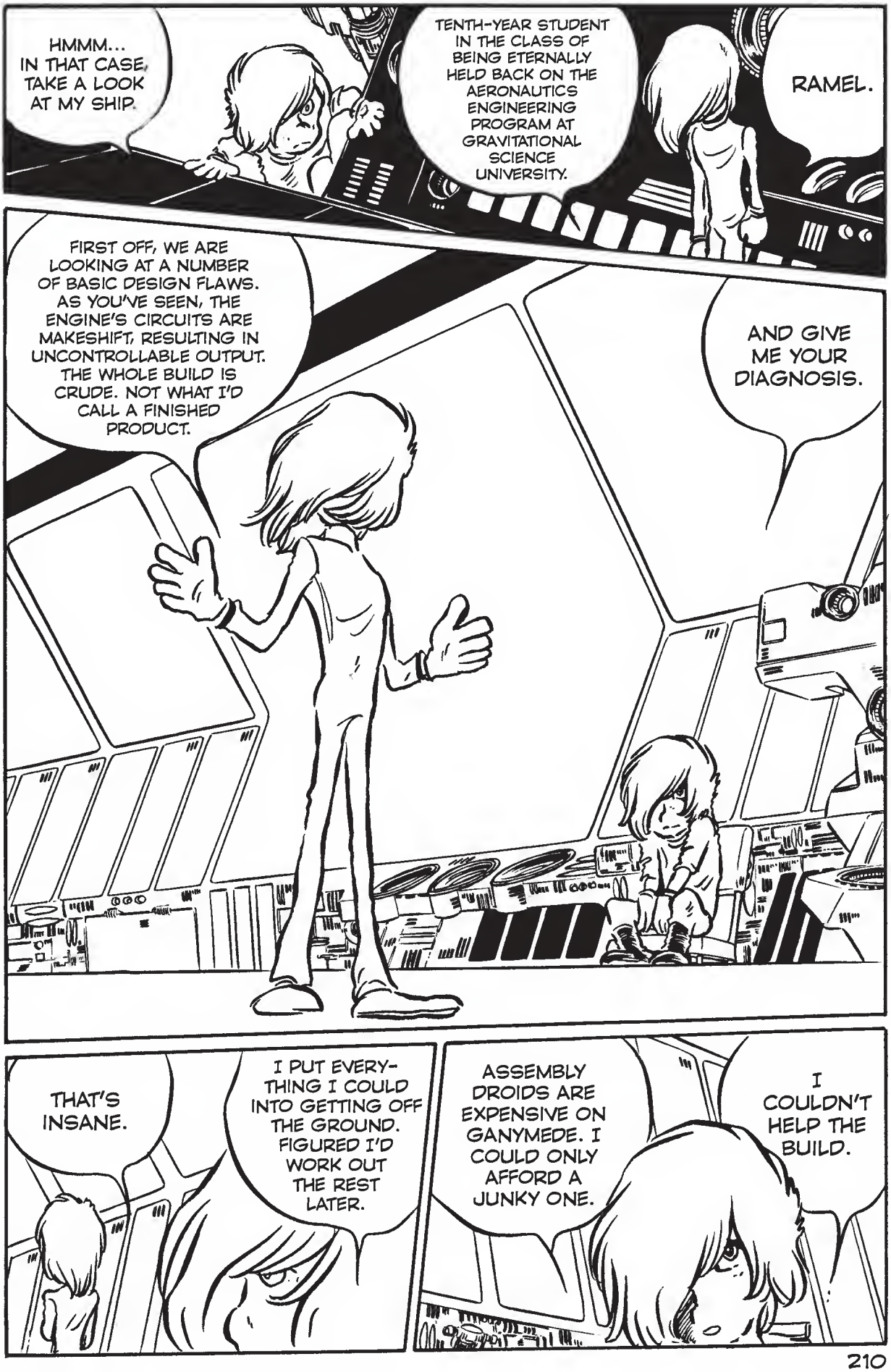

OHHHHHHHH
BUSTED MY SHIP AGAIN...
AT LEAST IT'S NOT IN PIECES...
YOU HIROSHI UMINO?
I'M THE SHERIFF. COME WITH ME.
SHERIFF? WHAT DO YOU WANT WITH ME?

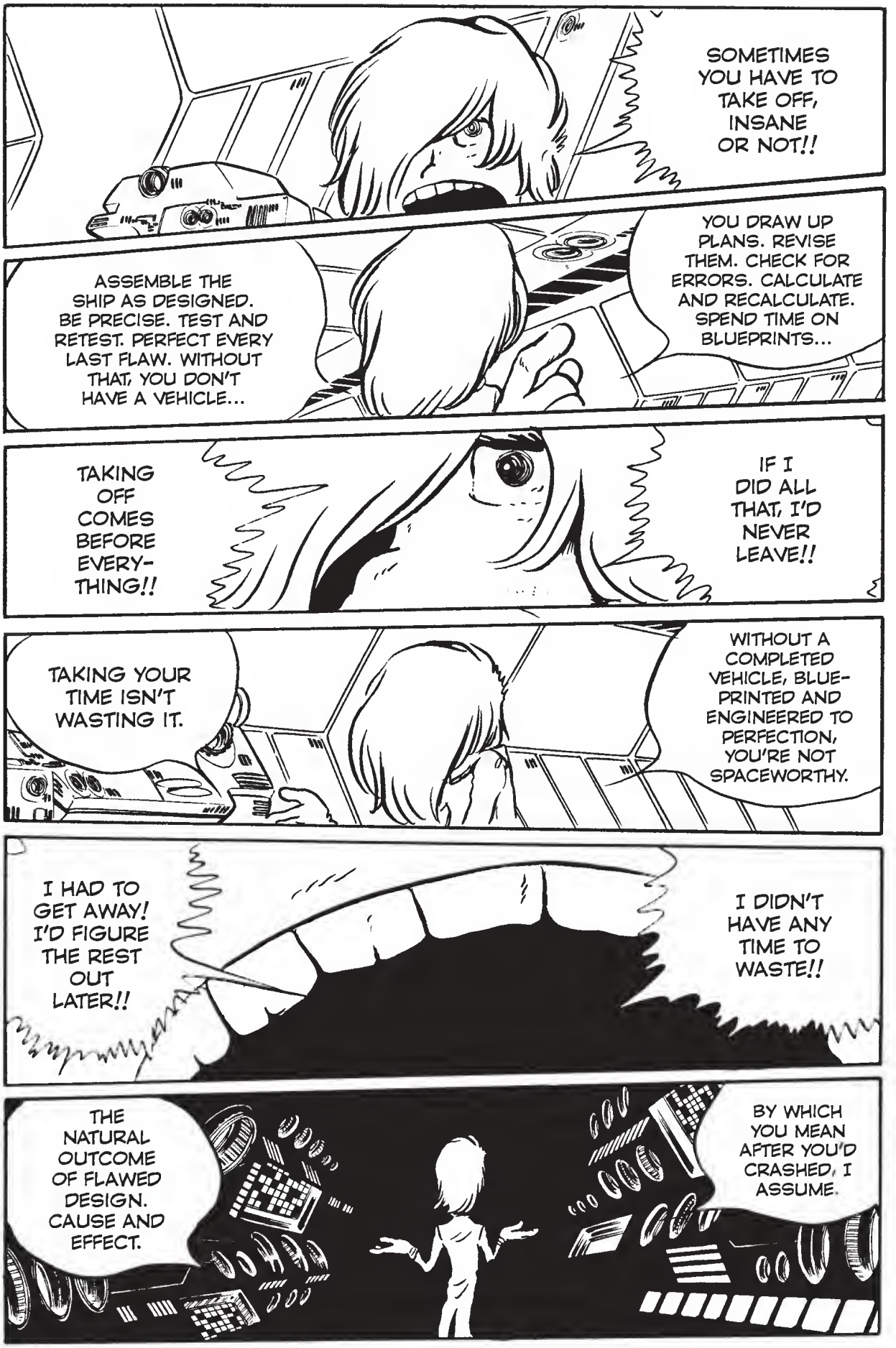

HUH?
I WAS TOLD TO HAND ALL THIS OVER TO YOU. IT'S YOURS.
ALL THAT MONEY FOR ME...?
TAKE A GANDER OUTSIDE. YOU BUSTED THOSE STOREFRONTS WHEN YOU CRASHED...
SALOON
NOPE. NOT ANYMORE.
YOU'RE PAYIN' FOR EVERYTHING YOU BROKE.
FAIR COMPENSATION FOR THE TOWN YOU WRECKED. GOT IT?

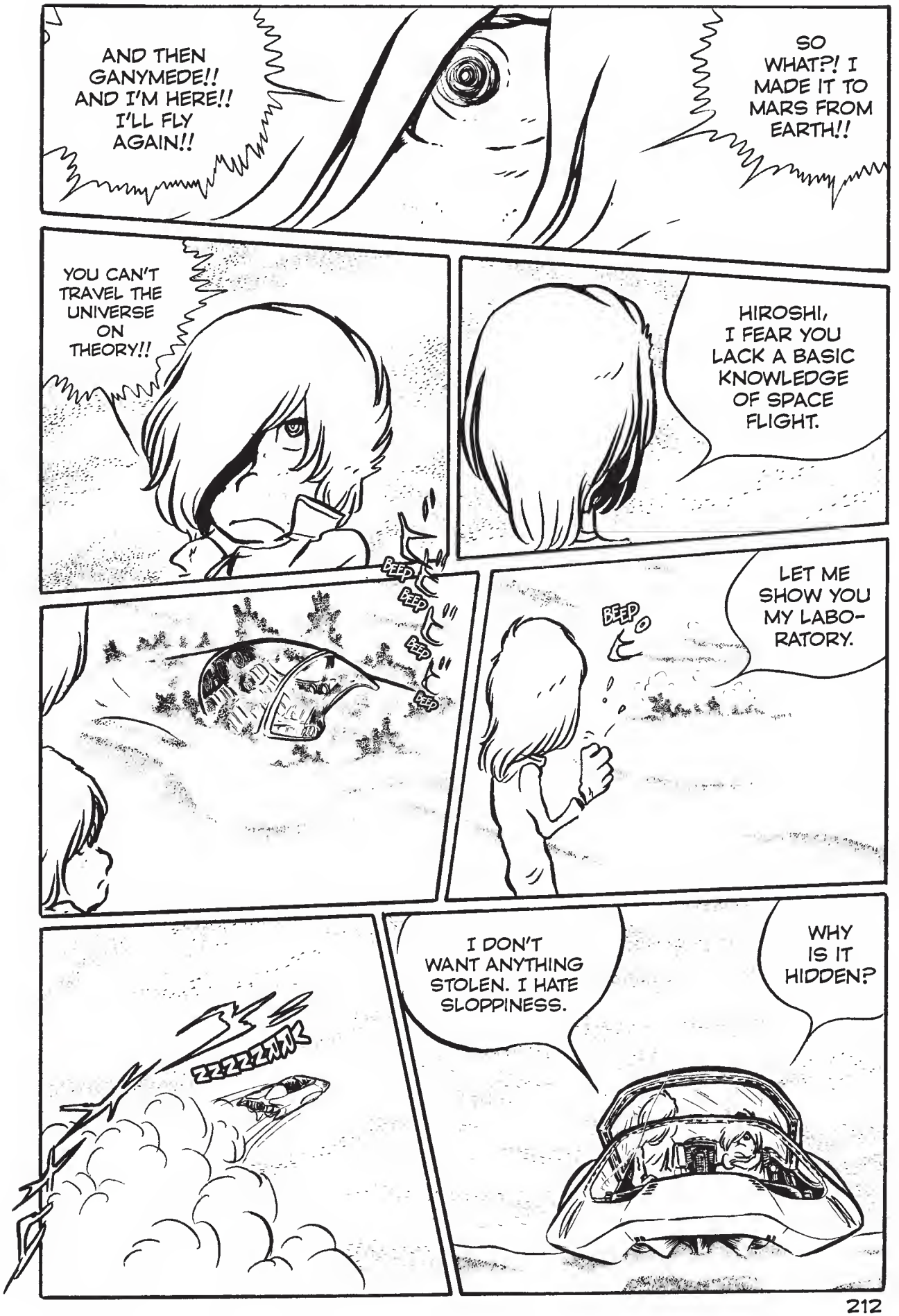

WHATEVER. I NEVER EXPECTED YOU TO GIVE ME THE MONEY IN THE FIRST PLACE.
SORRY KID, BUT THAT'S HOW IT GOES.
AHHHHH... WHY DID I CRASH AGAIN...?
AT LEAST I HIT OUTSIDE OF TOWN...
THE GRAVITATIONAL BRAKES MUST'VE KICKED IN.
OTHERWISE THAT'D BE *ME* ALL OVER THE PLACE...
SPACEFLIGHT'S TOUGHER THAN I THOUGHT...

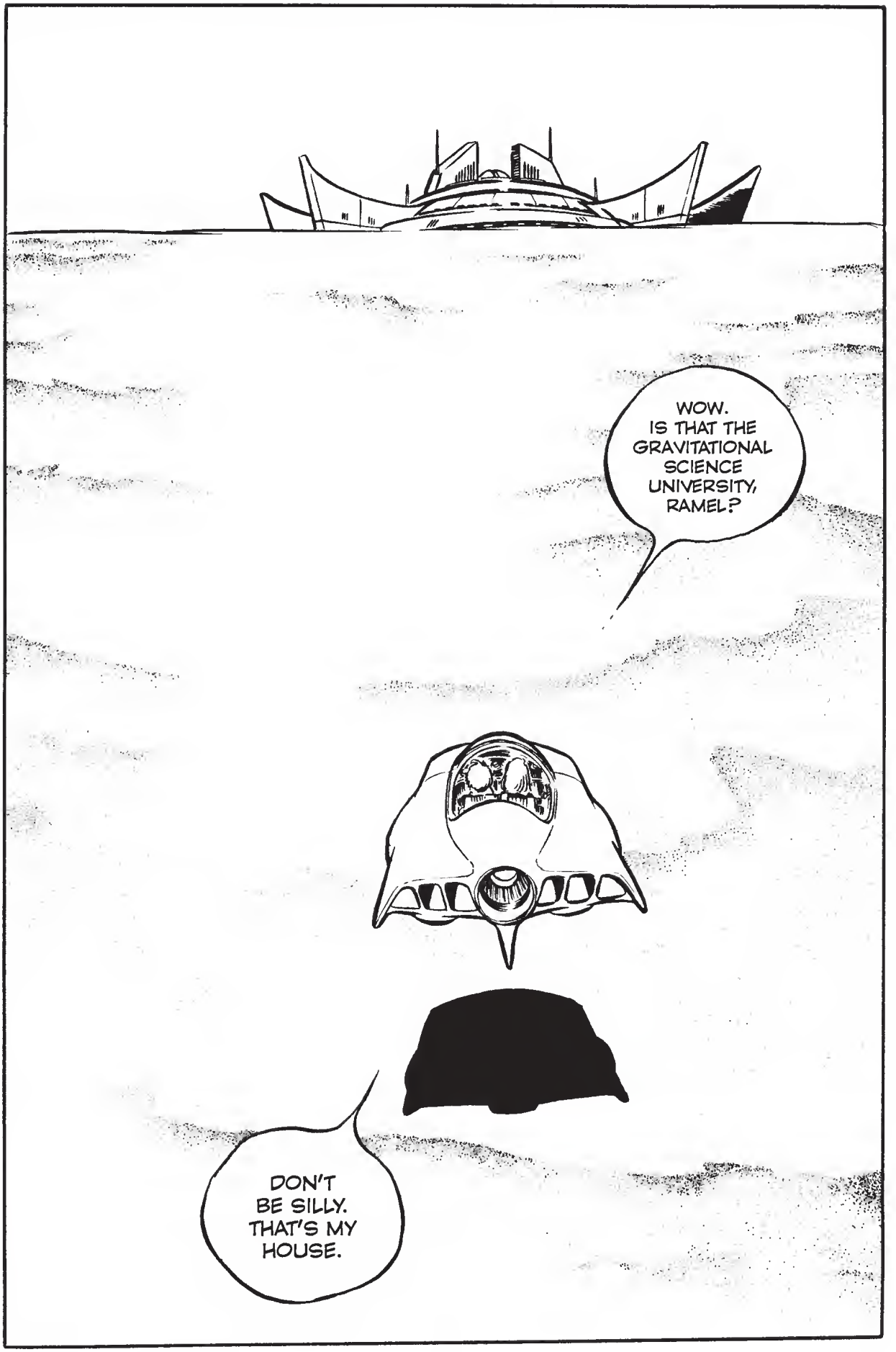

WHAT THE...? THOSE AREN'T *MY* FOOT-STEPS.
SOMEONE'S CIRCLING MY SHIP...

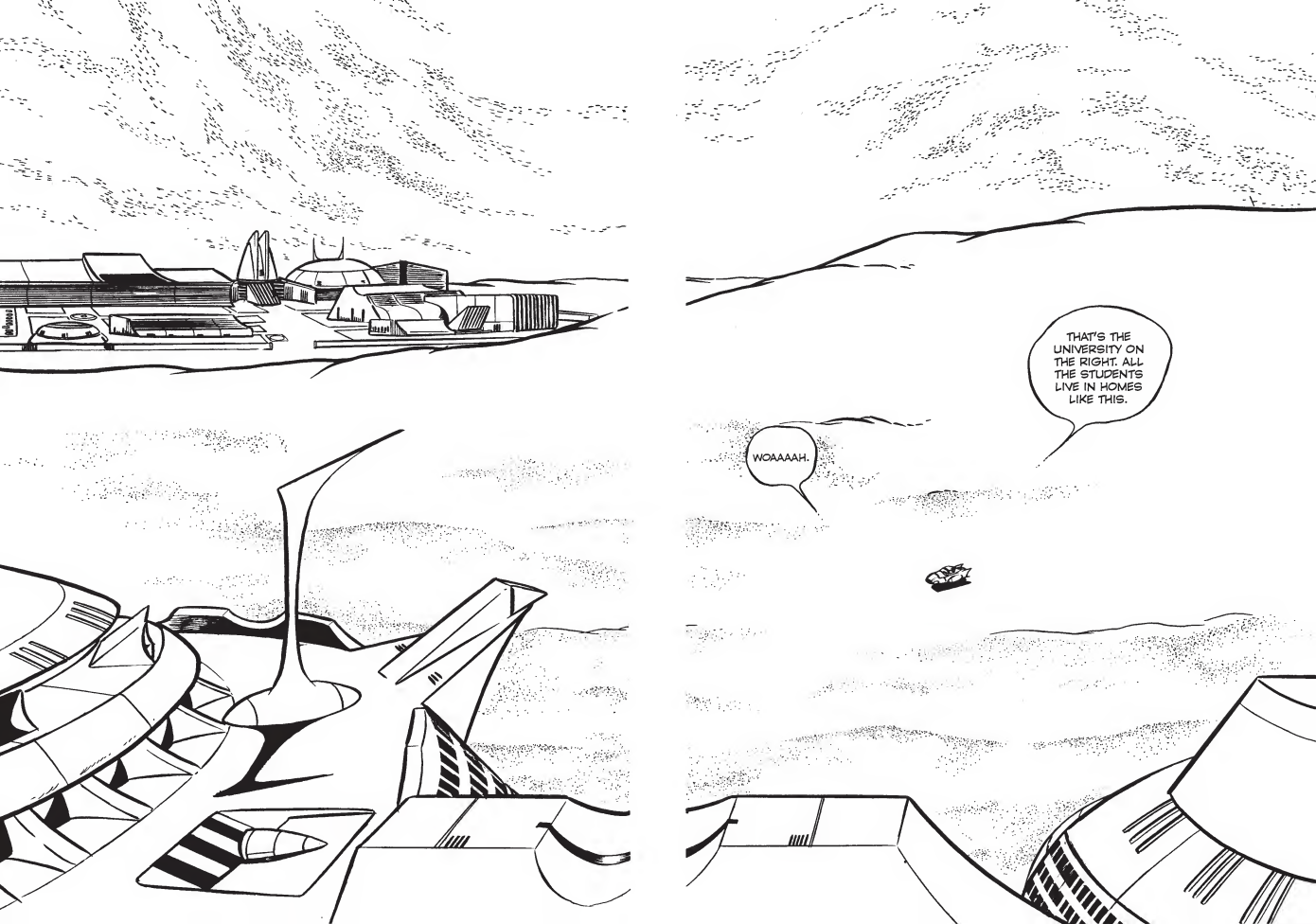

PERMIS-
SION?
WHO ARE YOU?! WHAT'RE YOU DOING ABOARD MY SHIP WITHOUT PERMISSION?!
AS EXPECTED. THIS SHIP IS INCAPABLE OF EXTENDED SPACEFLIGHT.
...OH YEAH...
DID YOU FORGET YOU LEFT THE AIRLOCK WIDE OPEN WHEN YOU JETTISONED YOUR ESCAPE CAPSULE?
YOU KNOW YOUR STUFF.
CAN I ASSUME YOU ASSEMBLED THE CIRCUITS YOURSELF? THE WIRES GOT TWISTED—CAME LOOSE DURING ZERO-G AND MADE CONTACT. THAT'S SHORTED YOUR ENGINE.
MY NAME'S HIROSHI UMINO. WHO'RE YOU?
ANY ORDINARY SHIP'S GOT NO SECRETS FROM ME. BEEN STUDYING THEM A WHILE.
HEY...!

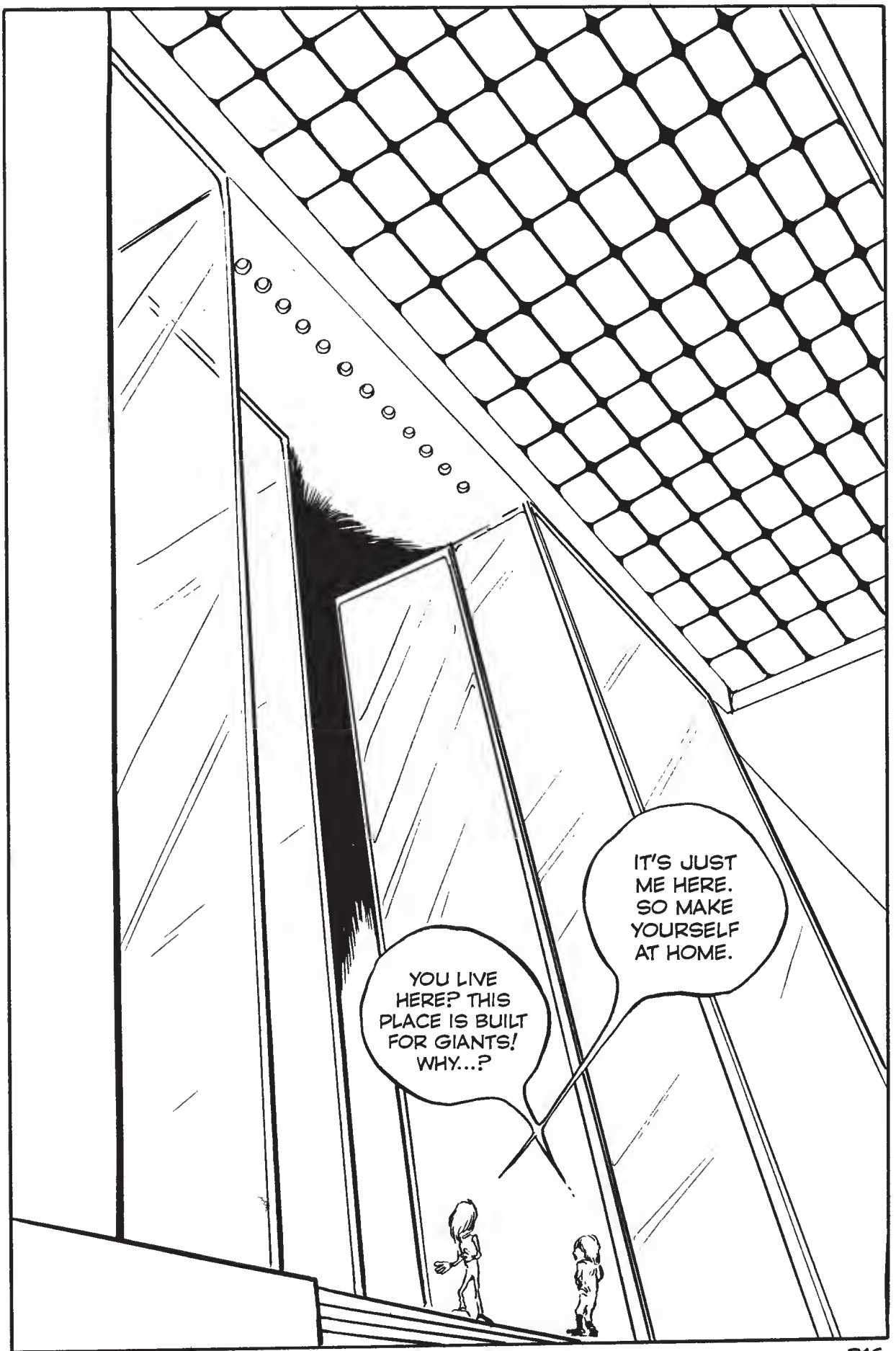

HMMM... IN THAT CASE, TAKE A LOOK AT MY SHIP.
TENTH-YEAR STUDENT IN THE CLASS OF BEING ETERNALLY HELD BACK ON THE AERONAUTICS ENGINEERING PROGRAM AT GRAVITATIONAL SCIENCE UNIVERSITY.
RAMEL.
FIRST OFF, WE ARE LOOKING AT A NUMBER OF BASIC DESIGN FLAWS. AS YOU'VE SEEN, THE ENGINE'S CIRCUITS ARE MAKESHIFT, RESULTING IN UNCONTROLLABLE OUTPUT. THE WHOLE BUILD IS CRUDE. NOT WHAT I'D CALL A FINISHED PRODUCT.
AND GIVE ME YOUR DIAGNOSIS.
THAT'S INSANE.
I PUT EVERY-THING I COULD INTO GETTING OFF THE GROUND. FIGURED I'D WORK OUT THE REST LATER.
ASSEMBLY DROIDS ARE EXPENSIVE ON GANYMEDE. I COULD ONLY AFFORD A JUNKY ONE.
I COULDN'T HELP THE BUILD.


SOMETIMES YOU HAVE TO TAKE OFF, INSANE OR NOT!!
YOU DRAW UP PLANS. REVISE THEM. CHECK FOR ERRORS. CALCULATE AND RECALCULATE. SPEND TIME ON BLUEPRINTS...
ASSEMBLE THE SHIP AS DESIGNED. BE PRECISE. TEST AND RETEST. PERFECT EVERY LAST FLAW. WITHOUT THAT, YOU DON'T HAVE A VEHICLE...
IF I DID ALL THAT, I'D NEVER LEAVE!!
TAKING OFF COMES BEFORE EVERY-THING!!
WITHOUT A COMPLETED VEHICLE, BLUE-PRINTED AND ENGINEERED TO PERFECTION, YOU'RE NOT SPACEWORTHY.
TAKING YOUR TIME ISN'T WASTING IT.
I DIDN'T HAVE ANY TIME TO WASTE!!
I HAD TO GET AWAY! I'D FIGURE THE REST OUT LATER!!
BY WHICH YOU MEAN AFTER YOU'D CRASHED, I ASSUME.
THE NATURAL OUTCOME OF FLAWED DESIGN. CAUSE AND EFFECT.

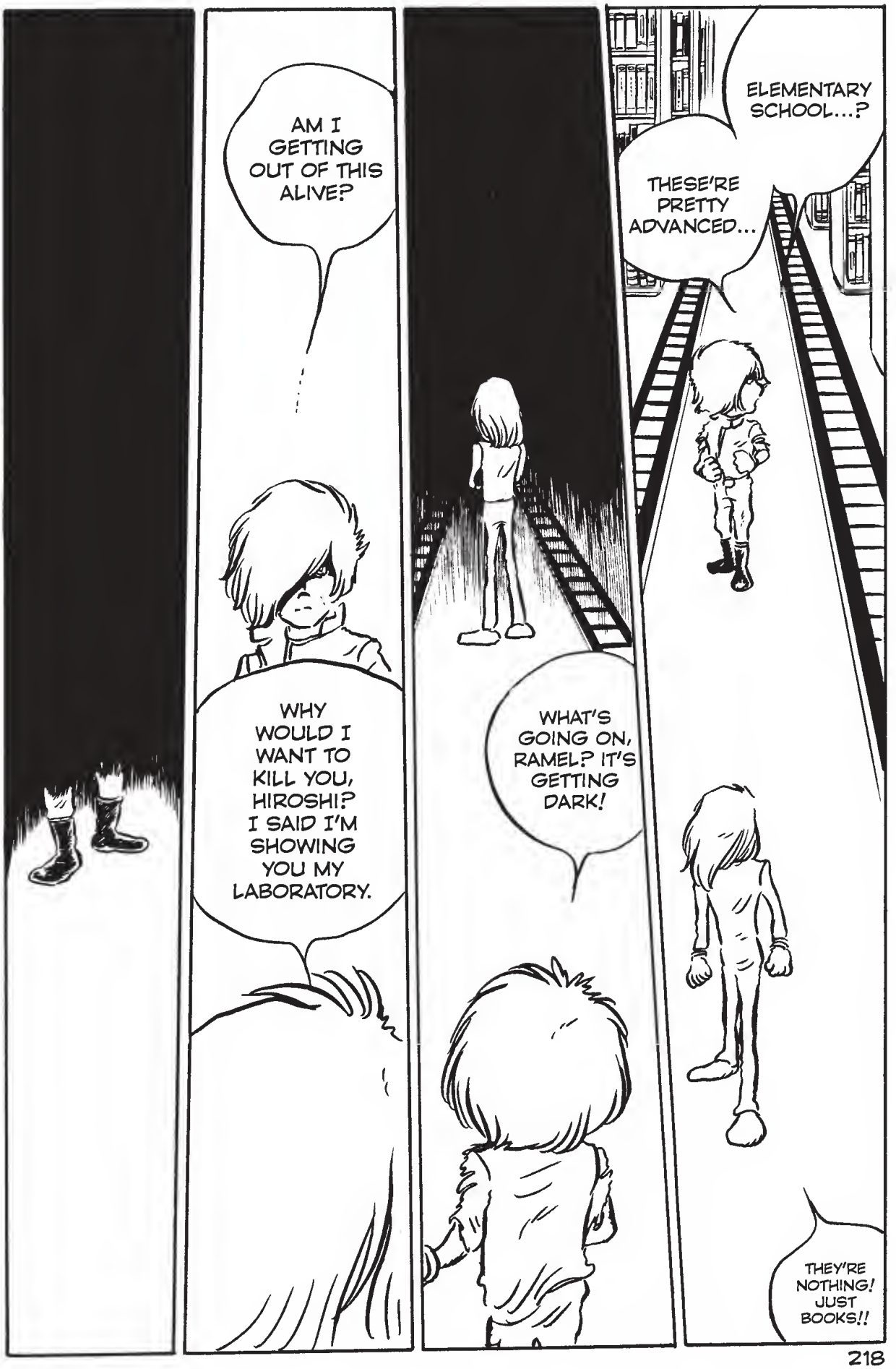

AND THEN GANYMEDE!! AND I'M HERE!! I'LL FLY AGAIN!!
SO WHAT?! I MADE IT TO MARS FROM EARTH!!
YOU CAN'T TRAVEL THE UNIVERSE ON THEORY!!
HIROSHI, I FEAR YOU LACK A BASIC KNOWLEDGE OF SPACE FLIGHT.
BEEP
BEEP
BEEP
BEEP
BEEP
LET ME SHOW YOU MY LABO-RATORY.
ZZZZZWK
I DON'T WANT ANYTHING STOLEN. I HATE SLOPPINESS.
WHY IS IT HIDDEN?


WOW. IS THAT THE GRAVITATIONAL SCIENCE UNIVERSITY, RAMEL?
DON'T BE SILLY. THAT'S MY HOUSE.


THAT'S THE UNIVERSITY ON THE RIGHT. ALL THE STUDENTS LIVE IN HOMES LIKE THIS.
WOAAAAH.


YOU LIVE HERE? THIS PLACE IS BUILT FOR GIANTS! WHY...?
IT'S JUST ME HERE. SO MAKE YOURSELF AT HOME.

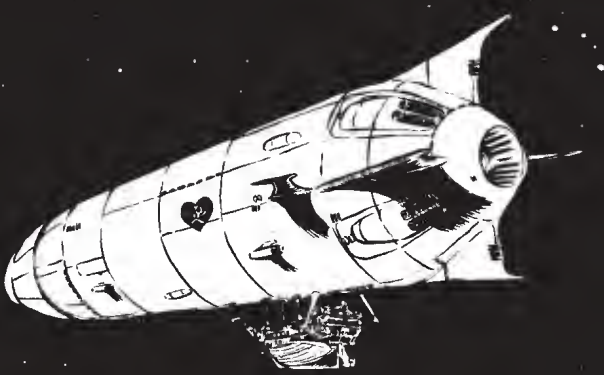
JUST TOUCH HERE. IT'LL TAKE YOU WHERE YOU WANT TO GO.
WALKING INDOORS ISN'T *THAT* STRENUOUS.
THE FLOOR MOVES, SO YOU DON'T HAVE TO WALK.
YOU READ ALL THESE BOOKS, RAMEL?
IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, YEAH.

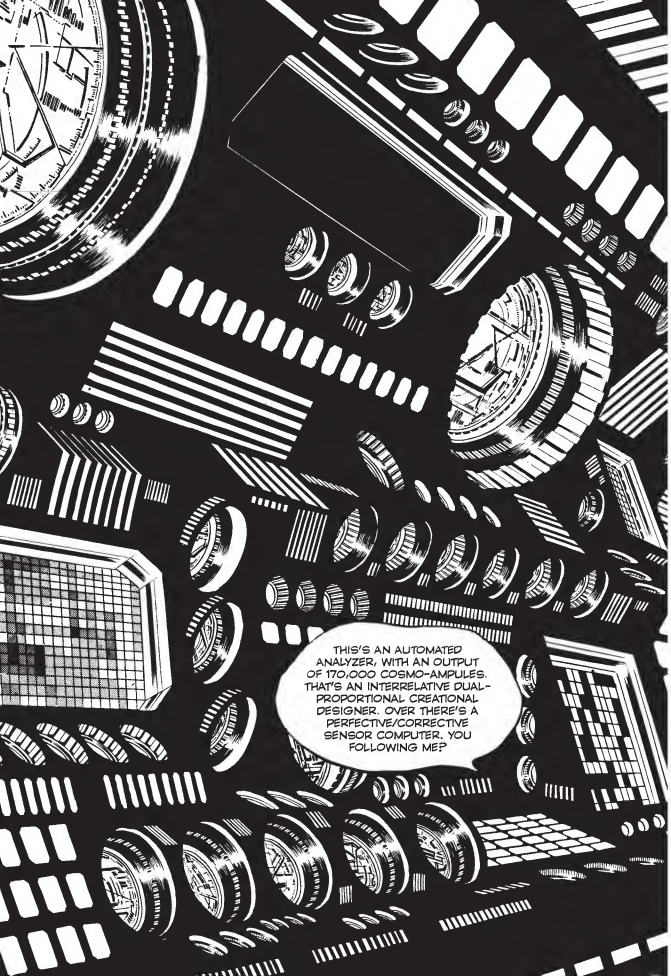

AM I GETTING OUT OF THIS ALIVE?
WHY WOULD I WANT TO KILL YOU, HIROSHI? I SAID I'M SHOWING YOU MY LABORATORY.
WHAT'S GOING ON, RAMEL? IT'S GETTING DARK!
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL...?
THESE'RE PRETTY ADVANCED...
THEY'RE NOTHING! JUST BOOKS!!

WE'RE HERE.
I'M TURNING ON THE LIGHTS!!
IT'S PITCH BLACK. I CAN'T SEE ANYTHING!!

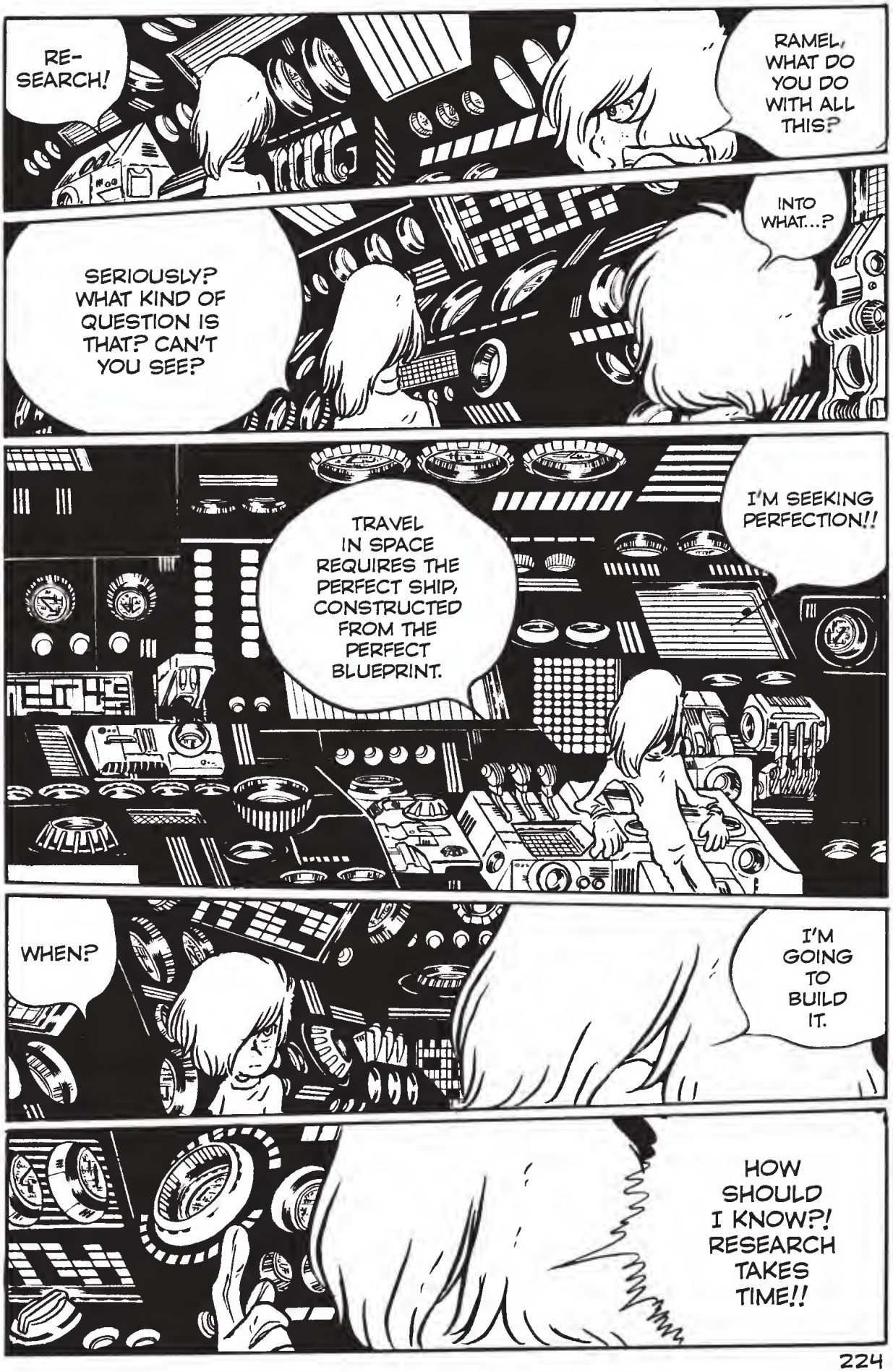
I AM EMERALDAS... AS I TRAVEL THROUGH THE SEA OF STARS, I ENCOUNTER THINGS THAT CANNOT BE EXPLAINED. CANNOT BE REASONED OUT OR CALCULATED... IN SUCH TIMES, TRAVELERS MUST POSSESS AN INDOMITABLE WILL... I KNOW THIS SO WELL, IT HURTS...

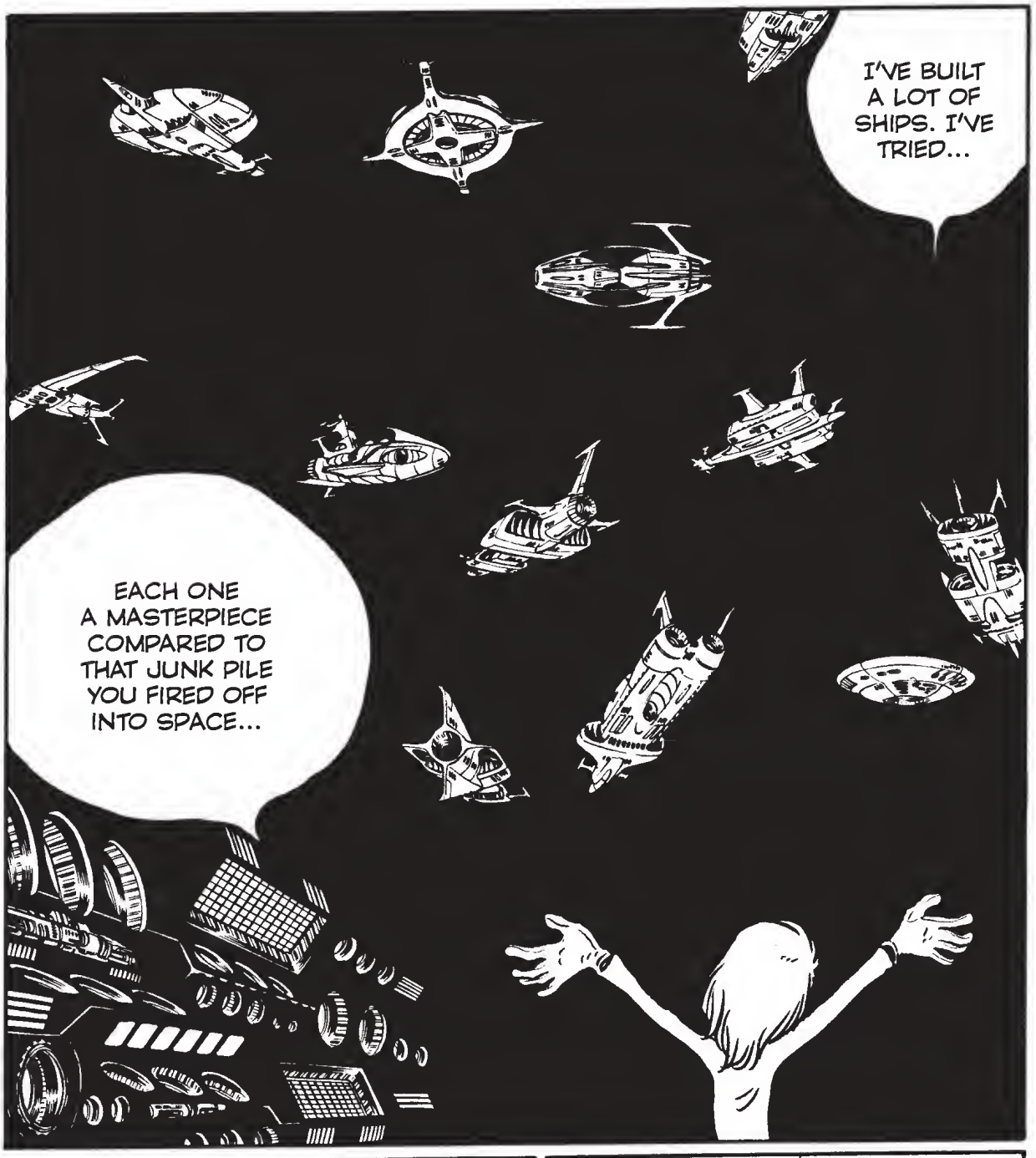
I CAN NO LONGER RECALL HOW LONG I HAVE WANDERED THE SEA OF STARS WITH MY COMPANION, THE QUEEN EMERALDAS. I HAVE SEEN MANY THINGS DURING MY LONG VOYAGE... THE UNIVERSE IS BUT A CHILD, IN THE MIDST OF AWKWARD GROWTH... NOTHING IS YET PERFECT... THOSE WHO SEEK PERFECTION FIND ONLY DESPAIR... AND DEATH...

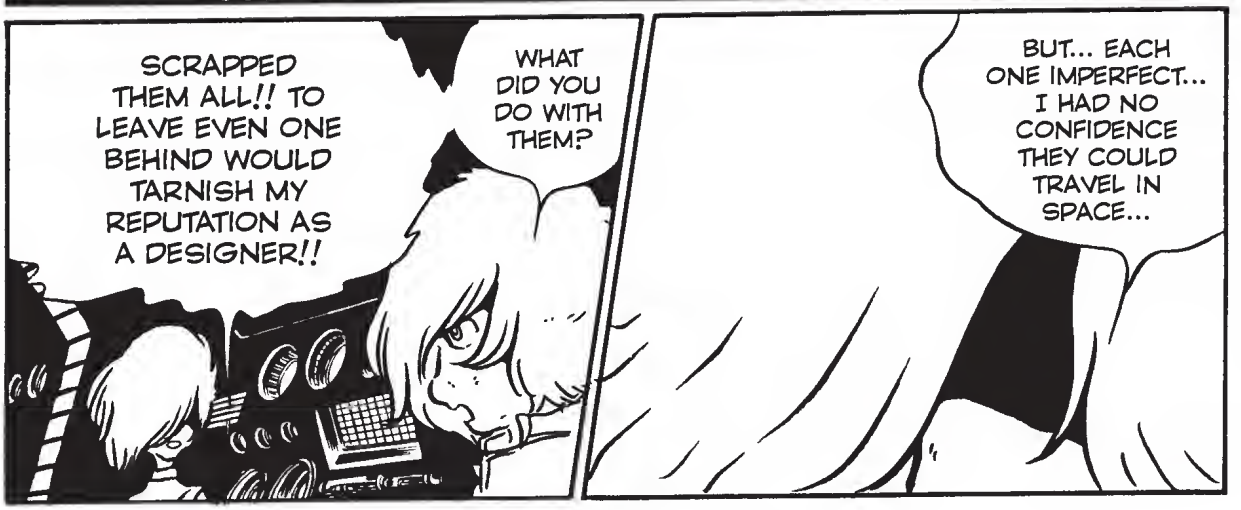


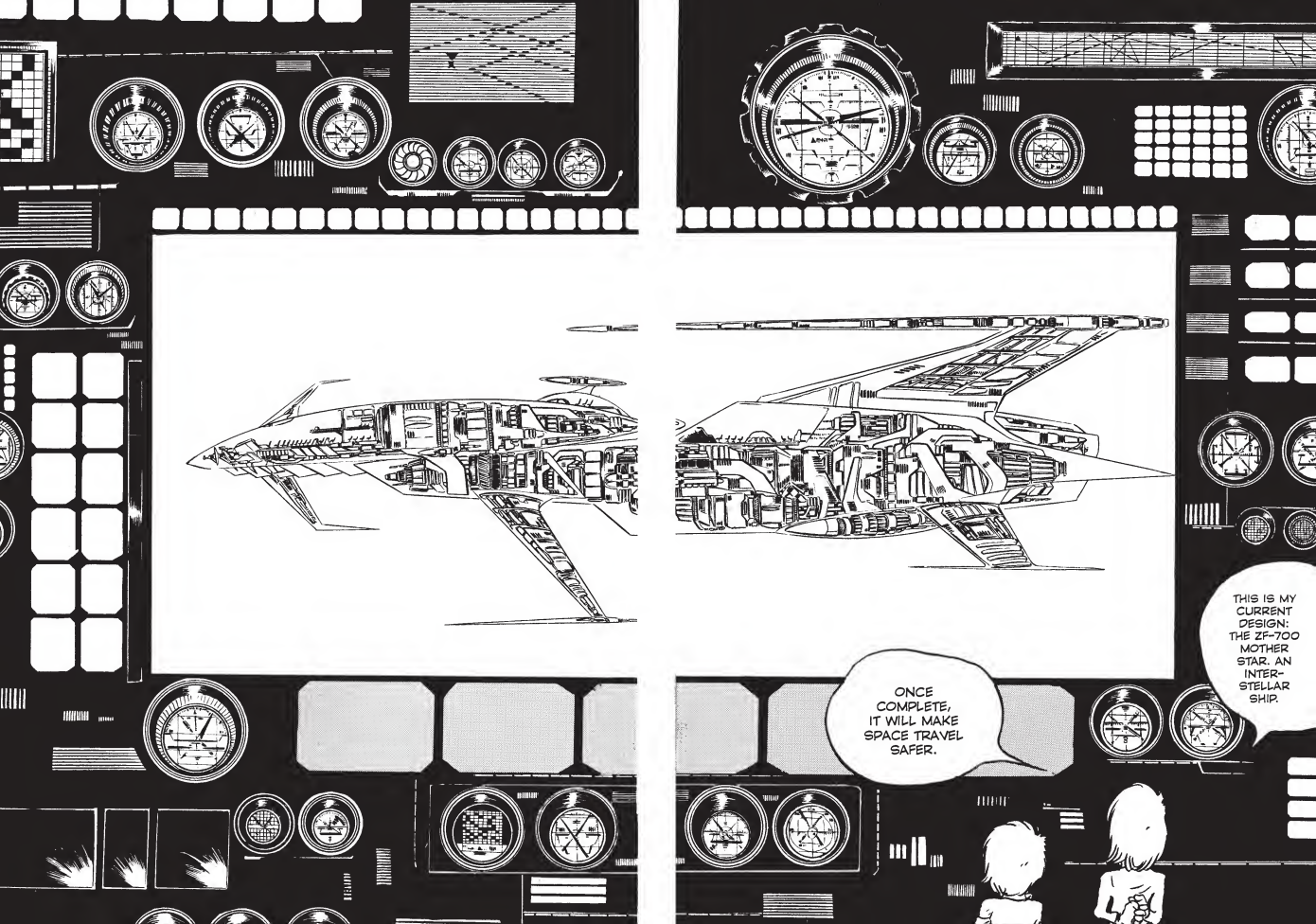

THIS'S AN AUTOMATED ANALYZER, WITH AN OUTPUT OF 170,000 COSMO-AMPULES. THAT'S AN INTERRELATIVE DUAL-PROPORTIONAL CREATIONAL-DESIGNER. OVER THERE'S A PERFECTIVE/CORRECTIVE SENSOR COMPUTER. YOU FOLLOWING ME?

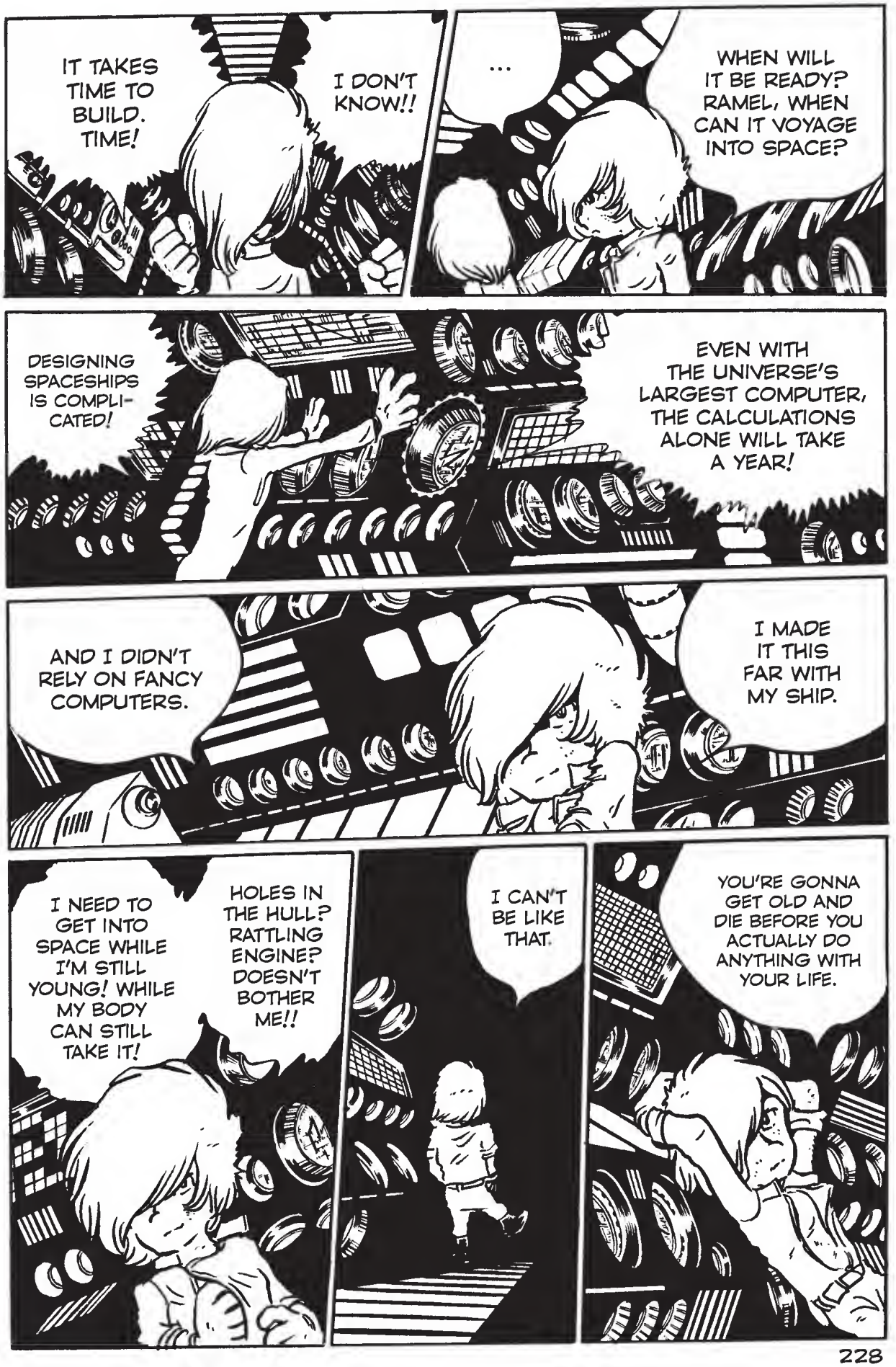
HERE IT IS. I'VE COLLECTED EVERYTHING I NEED FOR MY LABORATORY.

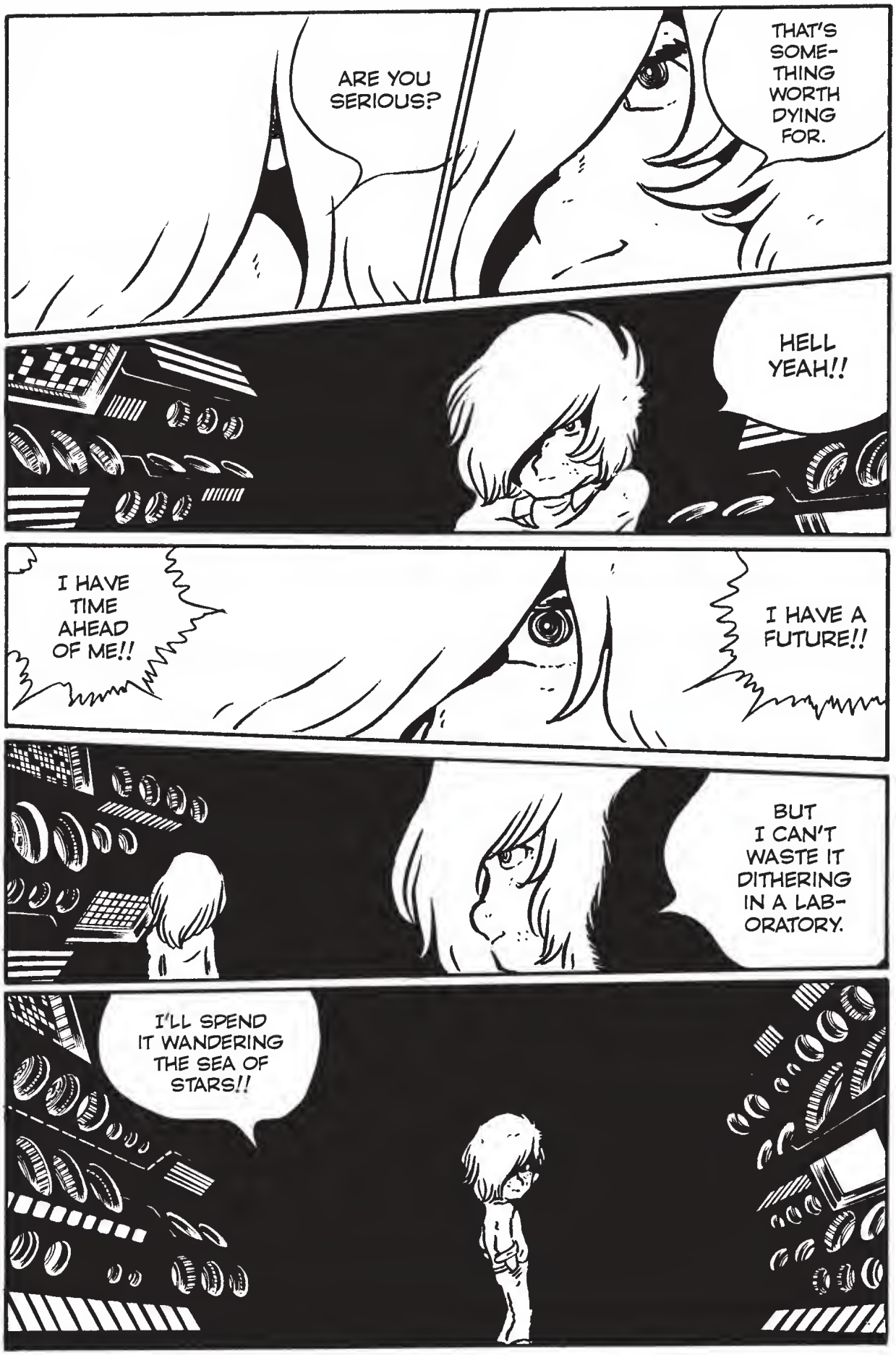

RE-SEARCH!
RAMEL, WHAT DO YOU DO WITH ALL THIS?
INTO WHAT...?
SERIOUSLY? WHAT KIND OF QUESTION IS THAT? CAN'T YOU SEE?
I'M SEEKING PERFECTION!!
TRAVEL IN SPACE REQUIRES THE PERFECT SHIP, CONSTRUCTED FROM THE PERFECT BLUEPRINT.
WHEN?
I'M GOING TO BUILD IT.
HOW SHOULD I KNOW?! RESEARCH TAKES TIME!!

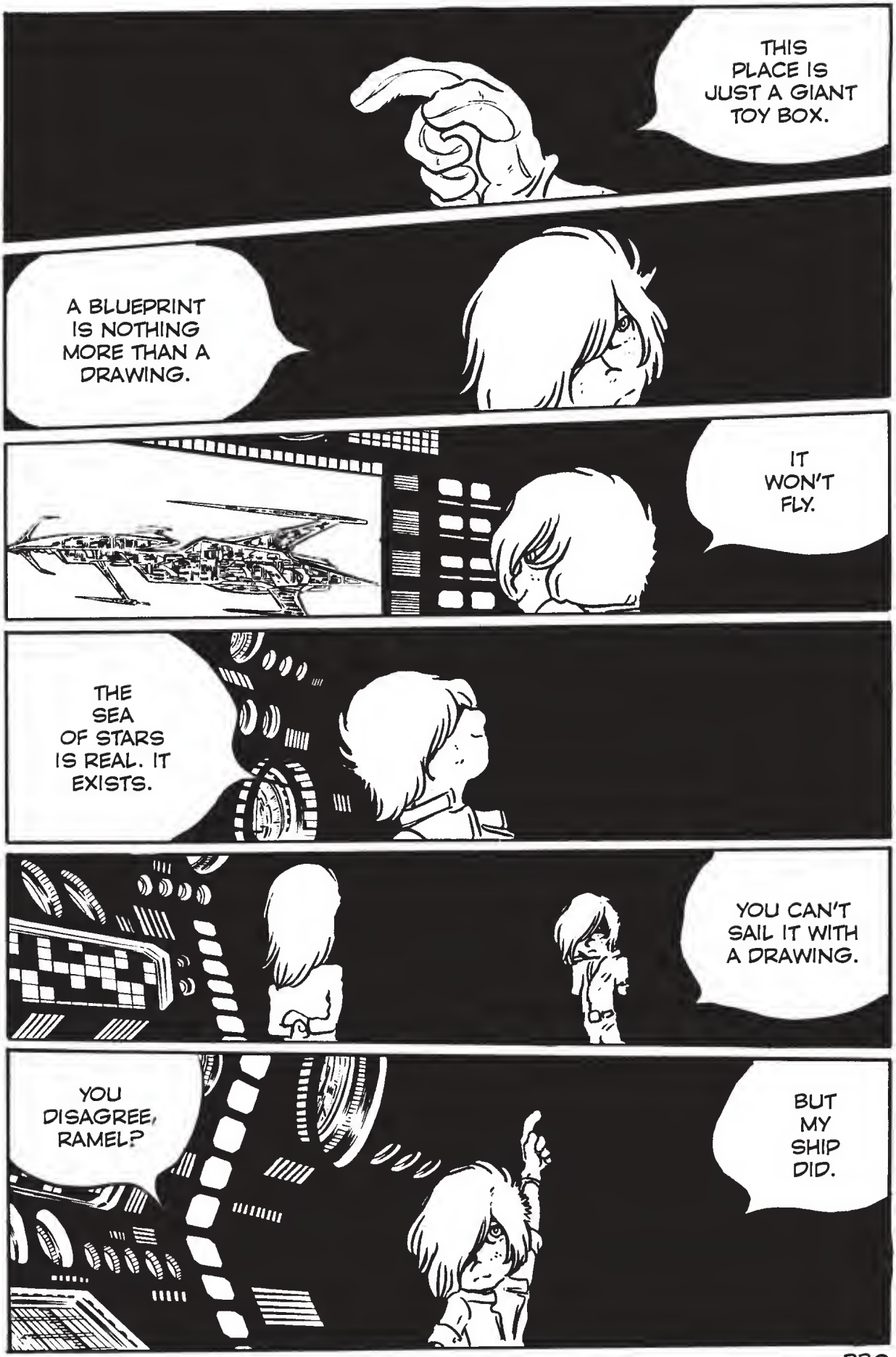

I'VE BUILT A LOT OF SHIPS. I'VE TRIED...
EACH ONE A MASTERPIECE COMPARED TO THAT JUNK PILE YOU FIRED OFF INTO SPACE...

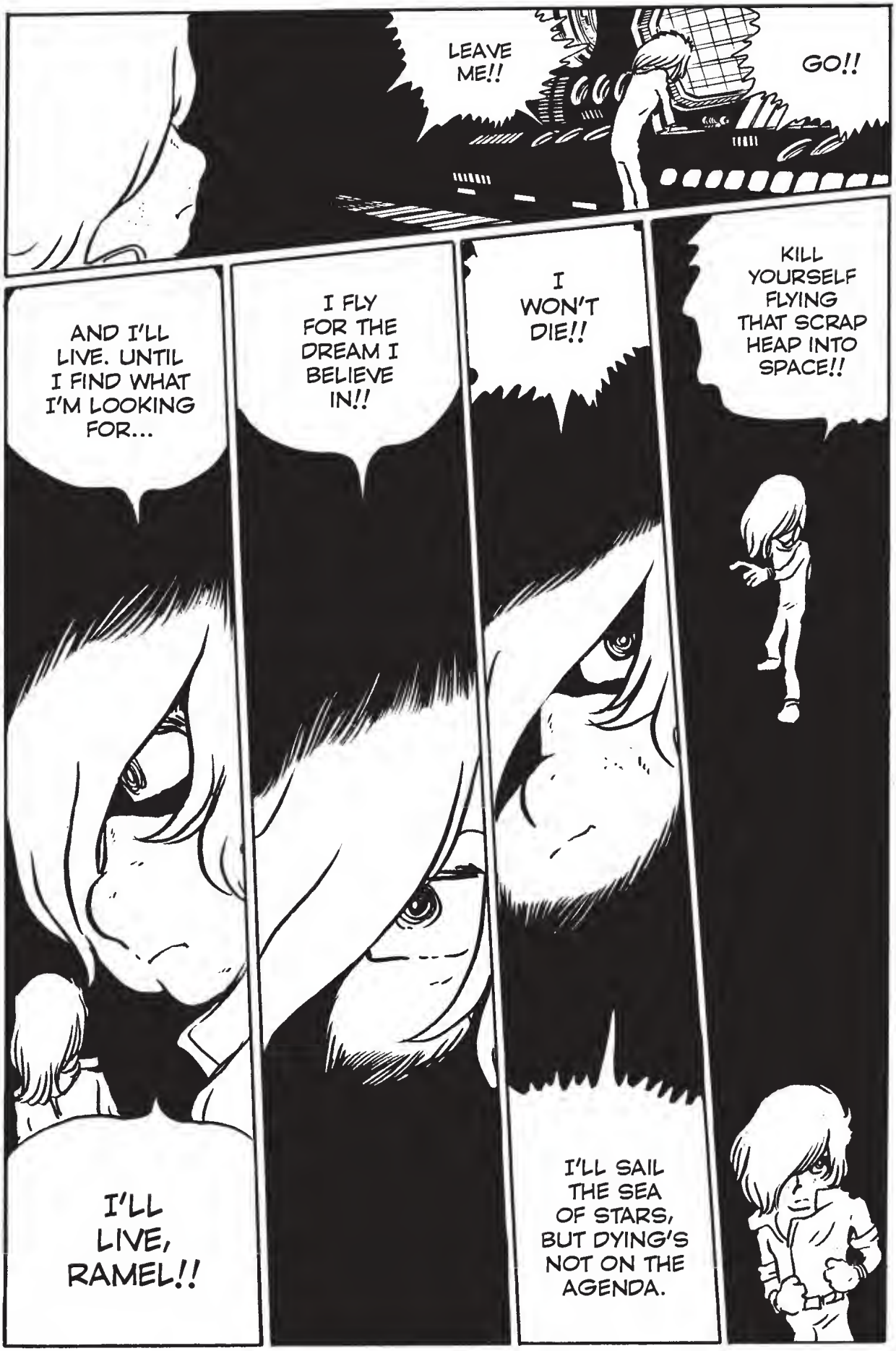

WHAT DID YOU DO WITH THEM?
SCRAPPED THEM ALL!! TO LEAVE EVEN ONE BEHIND WOULD TARNISH MY REPUTATION AS A DESIGNER!!
BUT... EACH ONE IMPERFECT... I HAD NO CONFIDENCE THEY COULD TRAVEL IN SPACE...

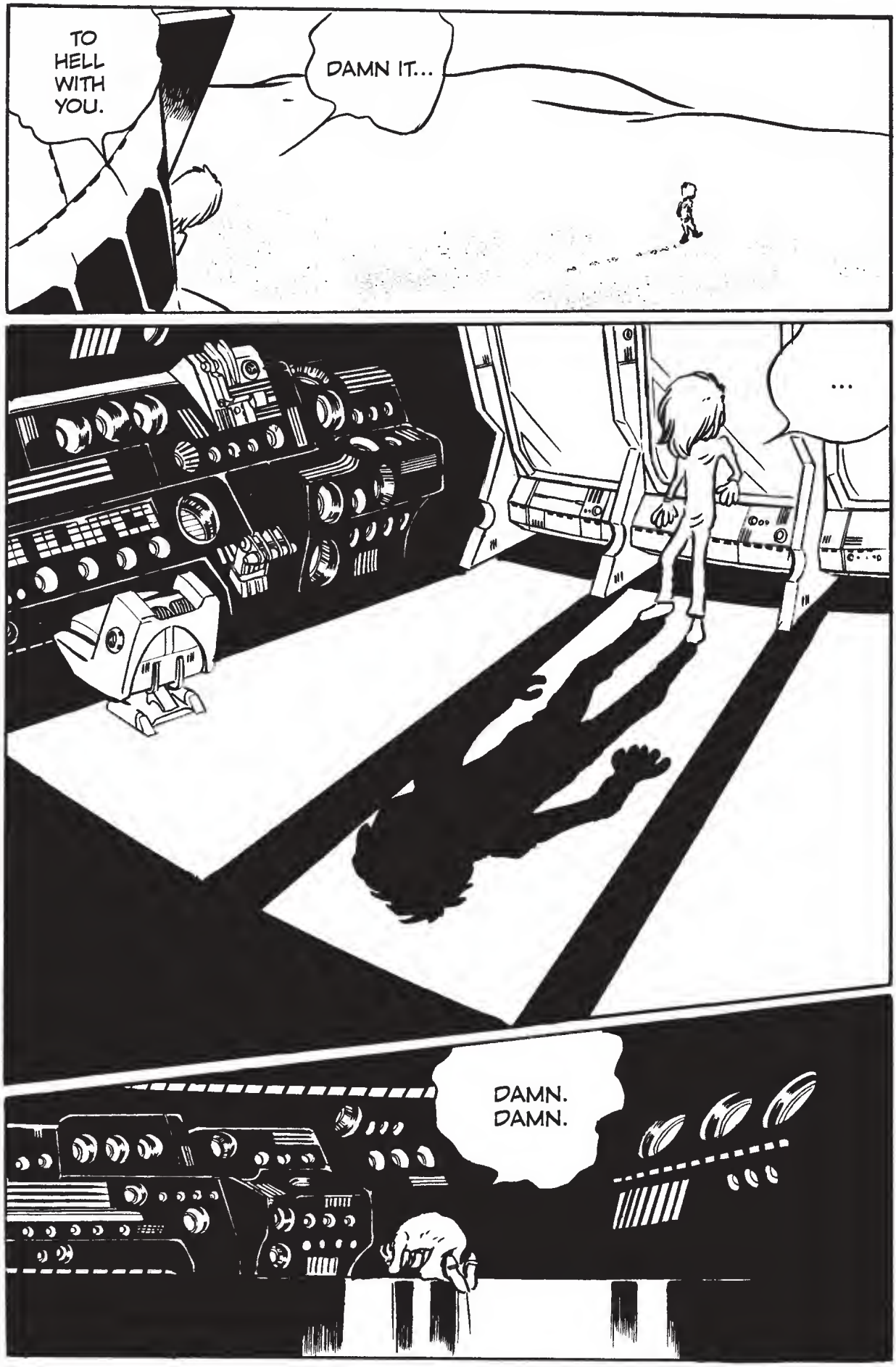

THIS IS MY CURRENT DESIGN: THE ZF-700 MOTHER STAR. AN INTER-STELLAR SHIP.
ONCE COMPLETE, IT WILL MAKE SPACE TRAVEL SAFER.


IT TAKES TIME TO BUILD. TIME!
I DON'T KNOW!!
...
WHEN WILL IT BE READY? RAMEL, WHEN CAN IT VOYAGE INTO SPACE?
DESIGNING SPACESHIPS IS COMPLI-CATED!
EVEN WITH THE UNIVERSE'S LARGEST COMPUTER, THE CALCULATIONS ALONE WILL TAKE A YEAR!
AND I DIDN'T RELY ON FANCY COMPUTERS.
I MADE IT THIS FAR WITH MY SHIP.
I NEED TO GET INTO SPACE WHILE I'M STILL YOUNG! WHILE MY BODY CAN STILL TAKE IT!
HOLES IN THE HULL? RATTLING ENGINE? DOESN'T BOTHER ME!!
I CAN'T BE LIKE THAT.
YOU'RE GONNA GET OLD AND DIE BEFORE YOU ACTUALLY DO ANYTHING WITH YOUR LIFE.

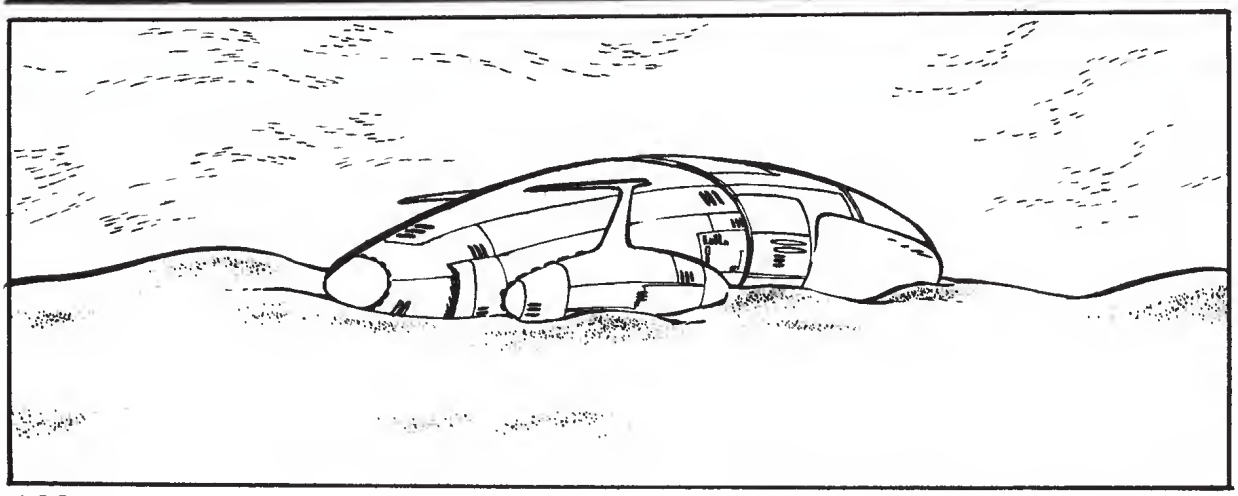

ARE YOU SERIOUS?
THAT'S SOMETHING WORTH DYING FOR.
HELL YEAH!!
I HAVE TIME AHEAD OF ME!!
I HAVE A FUTURE!!
BUT I CAN'T WASTE IT DITHERING IN A LABORATORY.
I'LL SPEND IT WANDERING THE SEA OF STARS!!

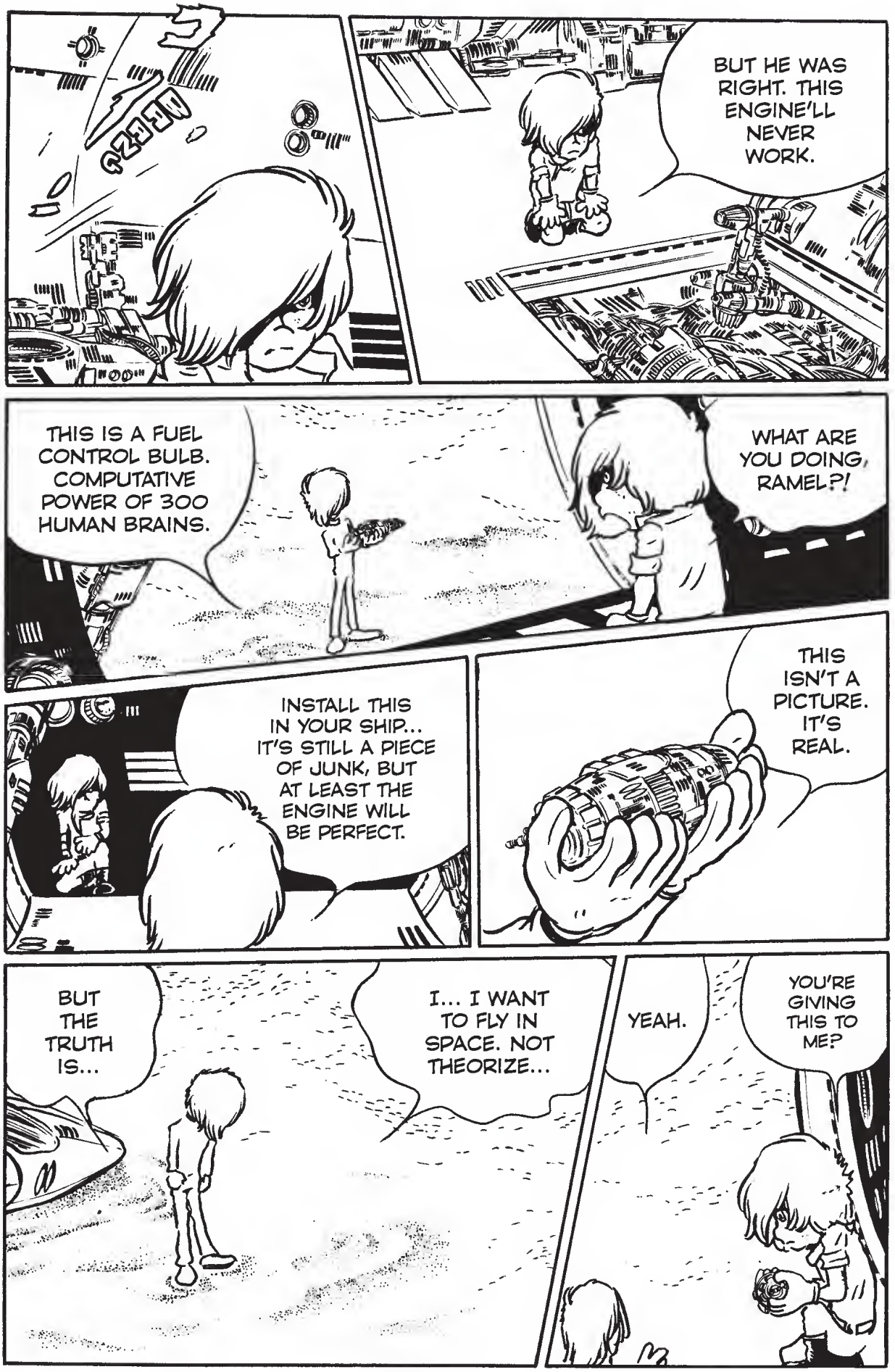

THIS PLACE IS JUST A GIANT TOY BOX.
A BLUEPRINT IS NOTHING MORE THAN A DRAWING.
IT WON'T FLY.
THE SEA OF STARS IS REAL. IT EXISTS.
YOU CAN'T SAIL IT WITH A DRAWING.
YOU DISAGREE, RAMEL?
BUT MY SHIP DID.

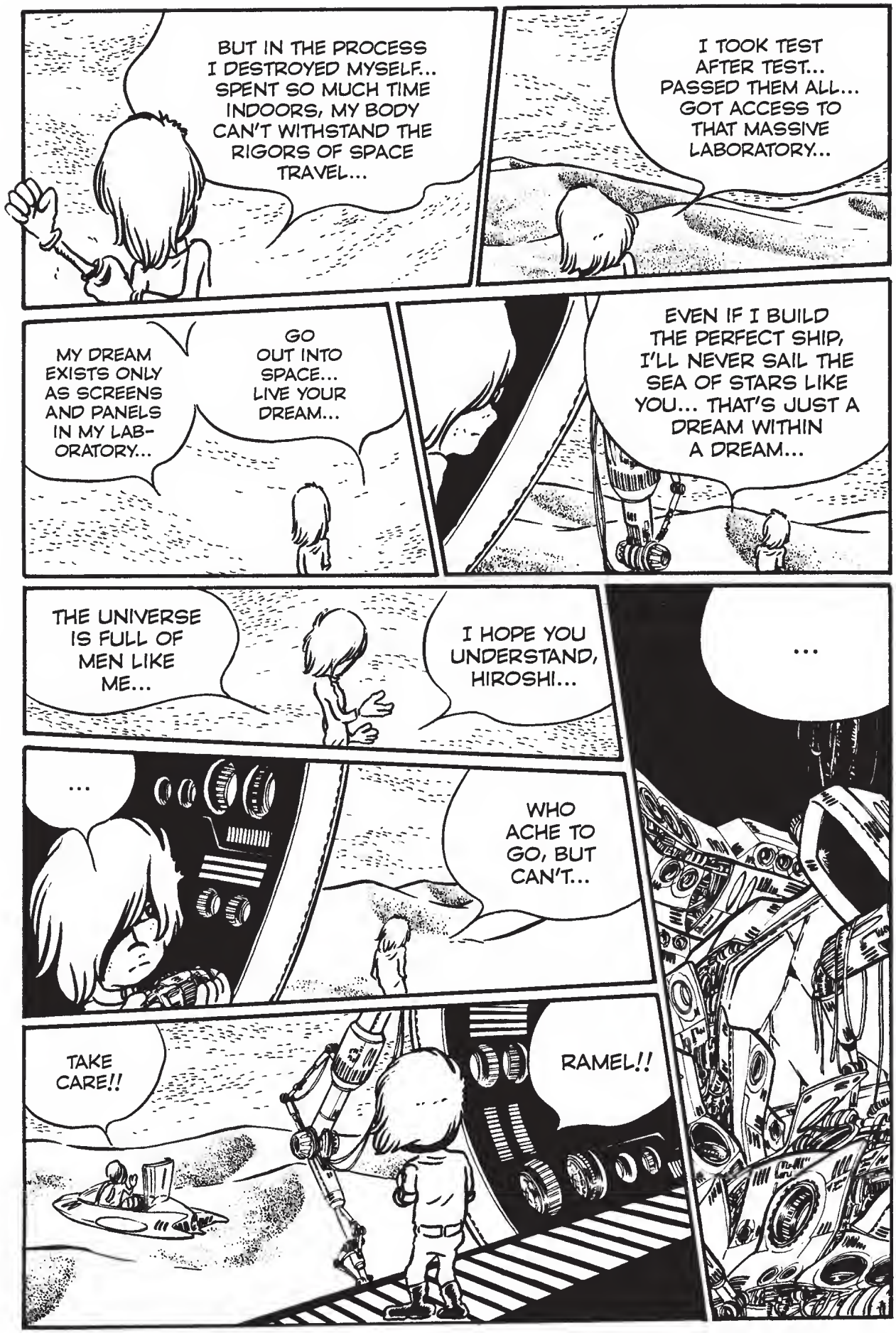

LEAVE ME!!
GO!!
KILL YOURSELF FLYING THAT SCRAP HEAP INTO SPACE!!
I WON'T DIE!!
I FLY FOR THE DREAM I BELIEVE IN!!
AND I'LL LIVE. UNTIL I FIND WHAT I'M LOOKING FOR...
I'LL SAIL THE SEA OF STARS, BUT DYING'S NOT ON THE AGENDA.
I'LL LIVE, RAMEL!!

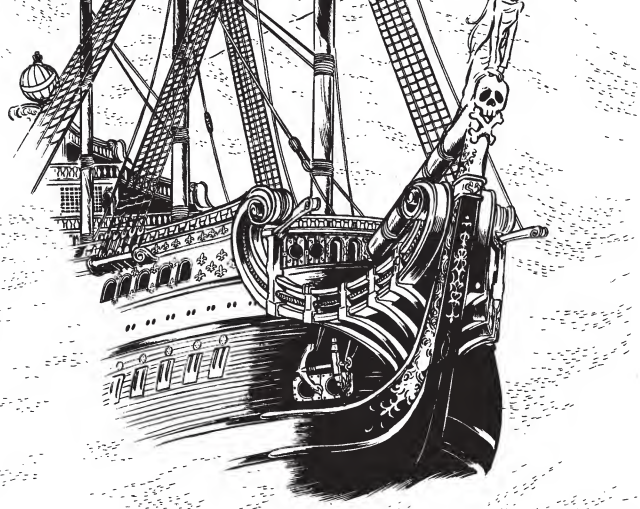

TO HELL WITH YOU.
DAMN IT...
...
DAMN. DAMN.

...
KA-WHAM
DAMN! CURSES!
KRRSSSH
SHHHHRR

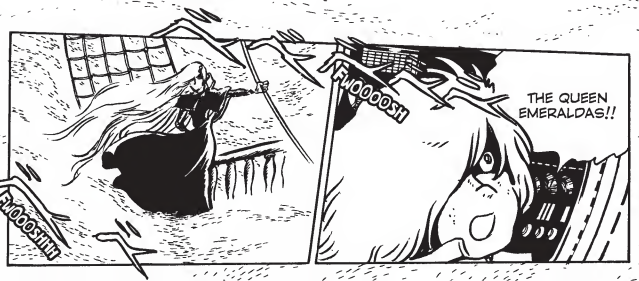


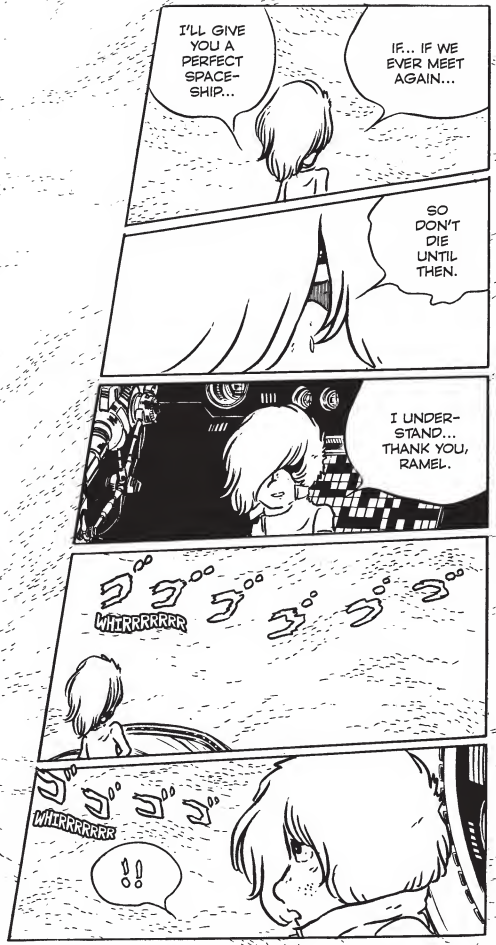

BUT HE WAS RIGHT. THIS ENGINE'LL NEVER WORK.
THIS IS A FUEL CONTROL BULB. COMPUTATIVE POWER OF 300 HUMAN BRAINS.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING, RAMEL?!
INSTALL THIS IN YOUR SHIP... IT'S STILL A PIECE OF JUNK, BUT AT LEAST THE ENGINE WILL BE PERFECT.
THIS ISN'T A PICTURE. IT'S REAL.
BUT THE TRUTH IS...
I... I WANT TO FLY IN SPACE. NOT THEORIZE...
YEAH.
YOU'RE GIVING THIS TO ME?

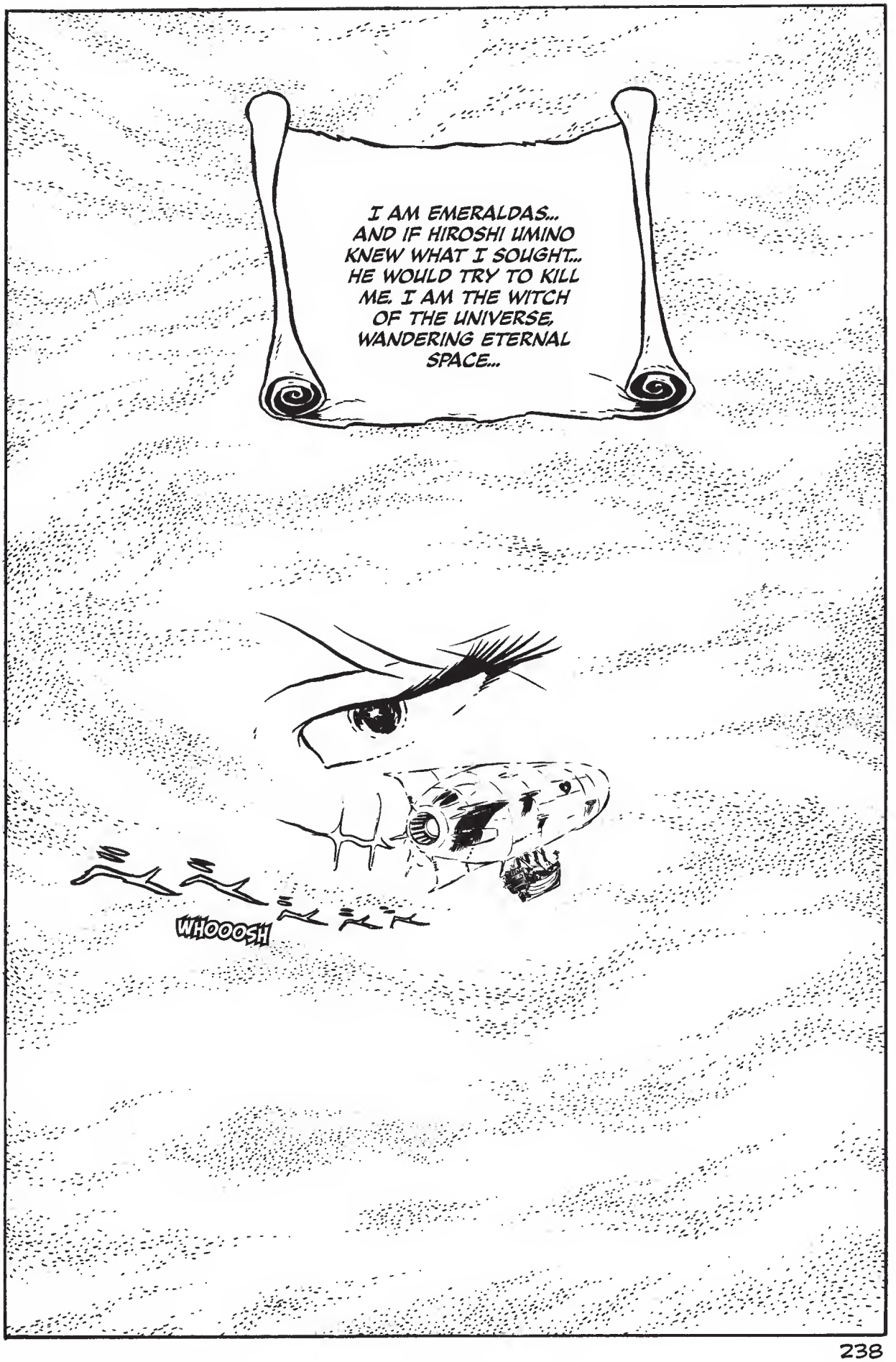

BUT IN THE PROCESS I DESTROYED MYSELF... SPENT SO MUCH TIME INDOORS, MY BODY CAN'T WITHSTAND THE RIGORS OF SPACE TRAVEL...
I TOOK TEST AFTER TEST... PASSED THEM ALL... GOT ACCESS TO THAT MASSIVE LABORATORY...
MY DREAM EXISTS ONLY AS SCREENS AND PANELS IN MY LAB-ORATORY...
GO OUT INTO SPACE... LIVE YOUR DREAM...
EVEN IF I BUILD THE PERFECT SHIP, I'LL NEVER SAIL THE SEA OF STARS LIKE YOU... THAT'S JUST A DREAM WITHIN A DREAM...
THE UNIVERSE IS FULL OF MEN LIKE ME...
I HOPE YOU UNDERSTAND, HIROSHI...
...
...
WHO ACHE TO GO, BUT CAN'T...
TAKE CARE!!
RAMEL!!

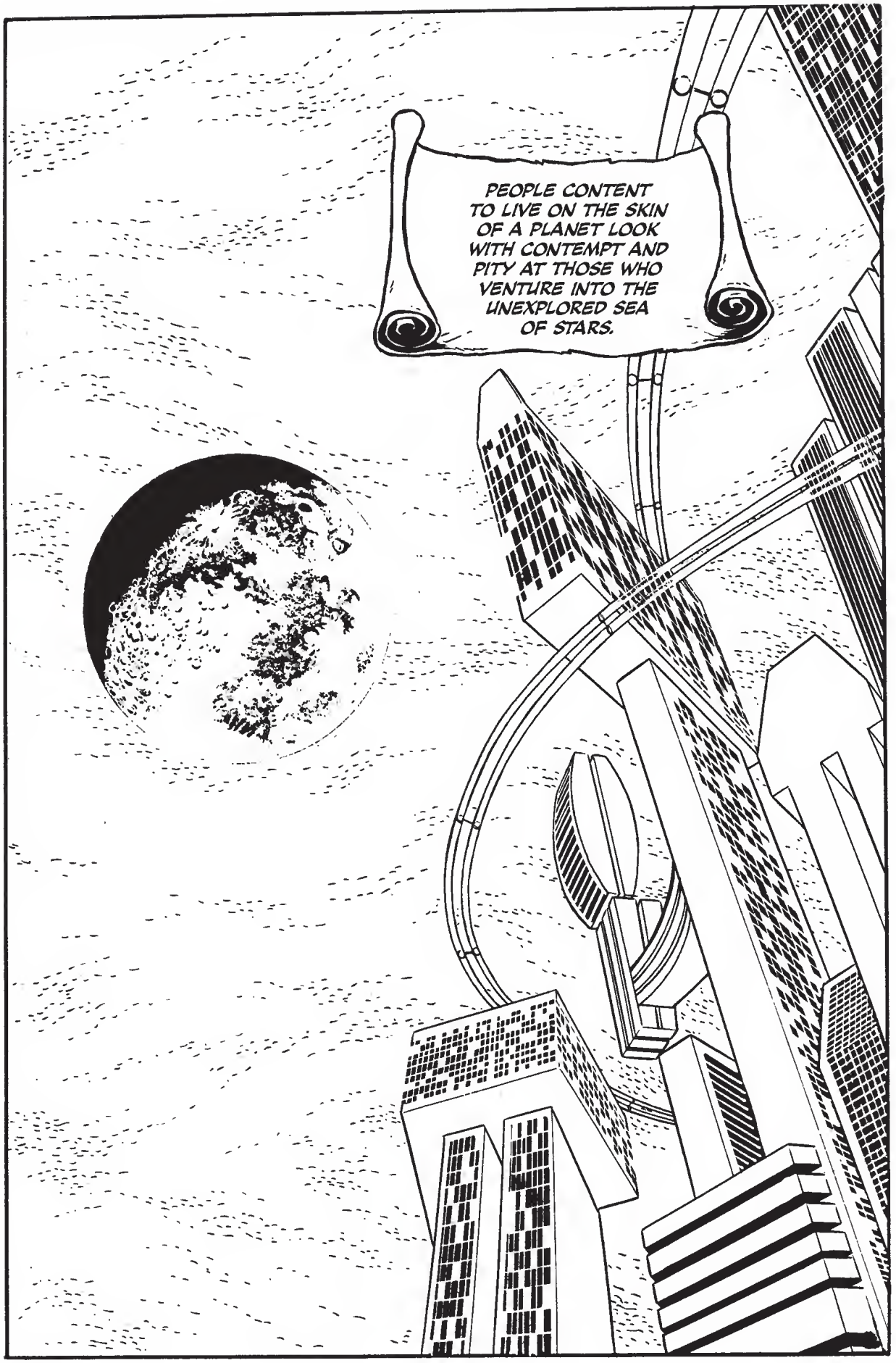


WHIRRRRRRR


WHOOOSHH
WHOOOSHH
THE QUEEN EMERALDAS!!

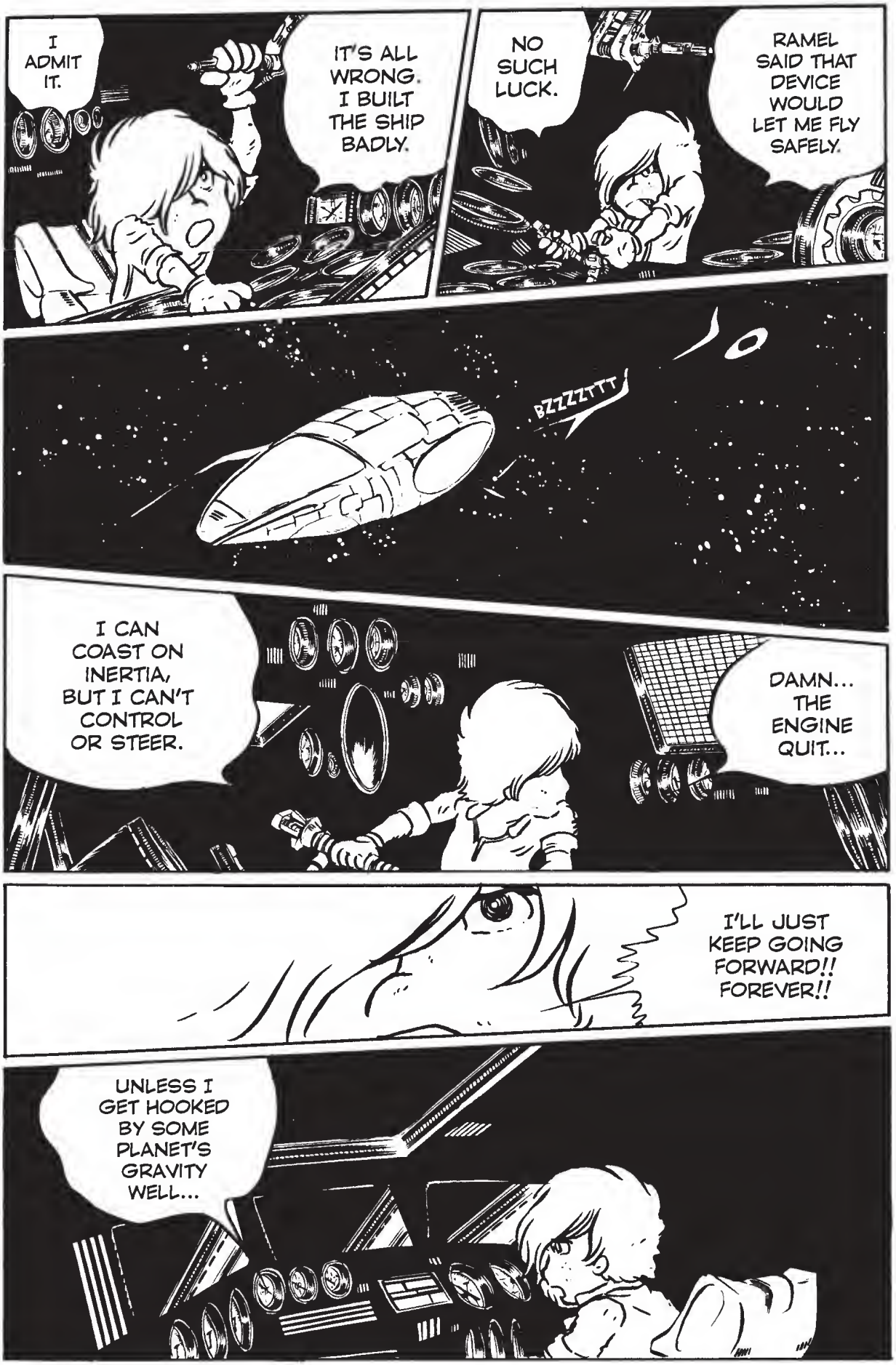

I'LL GIVE YOU A PERFECT SPACE-SHIP...
IF... IF WE EVER MEET AGAIN...
SO DON'T DIE UNTIL THEN.
I UNDER-STAND... THANK YOU, RAMEL.
WHIRRRRRRR
WHIRRRRRRR
!!

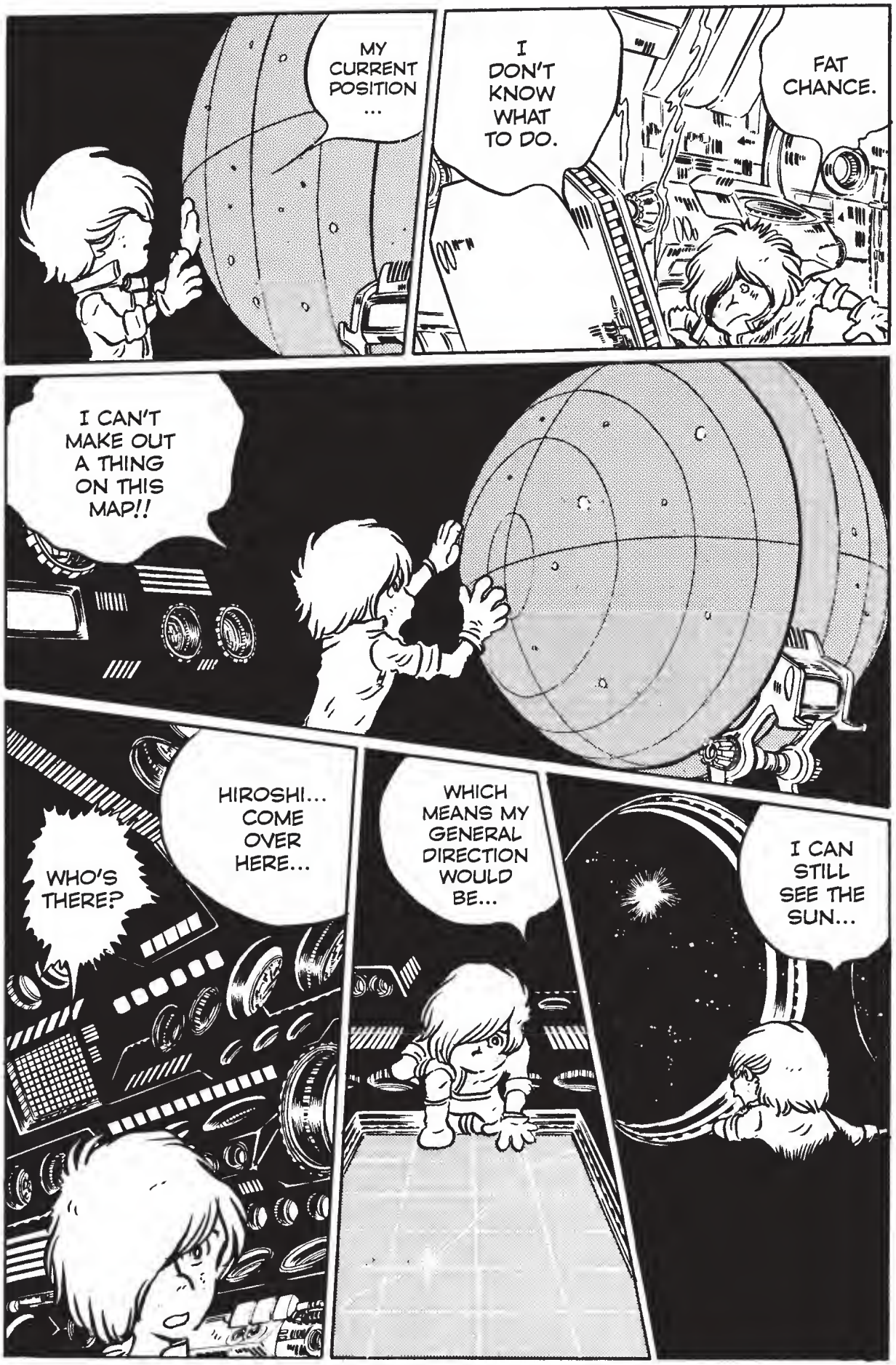

I AM EMERALDAS... AND IF HIROSHI UMINO KNEW WHAT I SOUGHT... HE WOULD TRY TO KILL ME. I AM THE WITCH OF THE UNIVERSE, WANDERING ETERNAL SPACE...
WHOOOSH

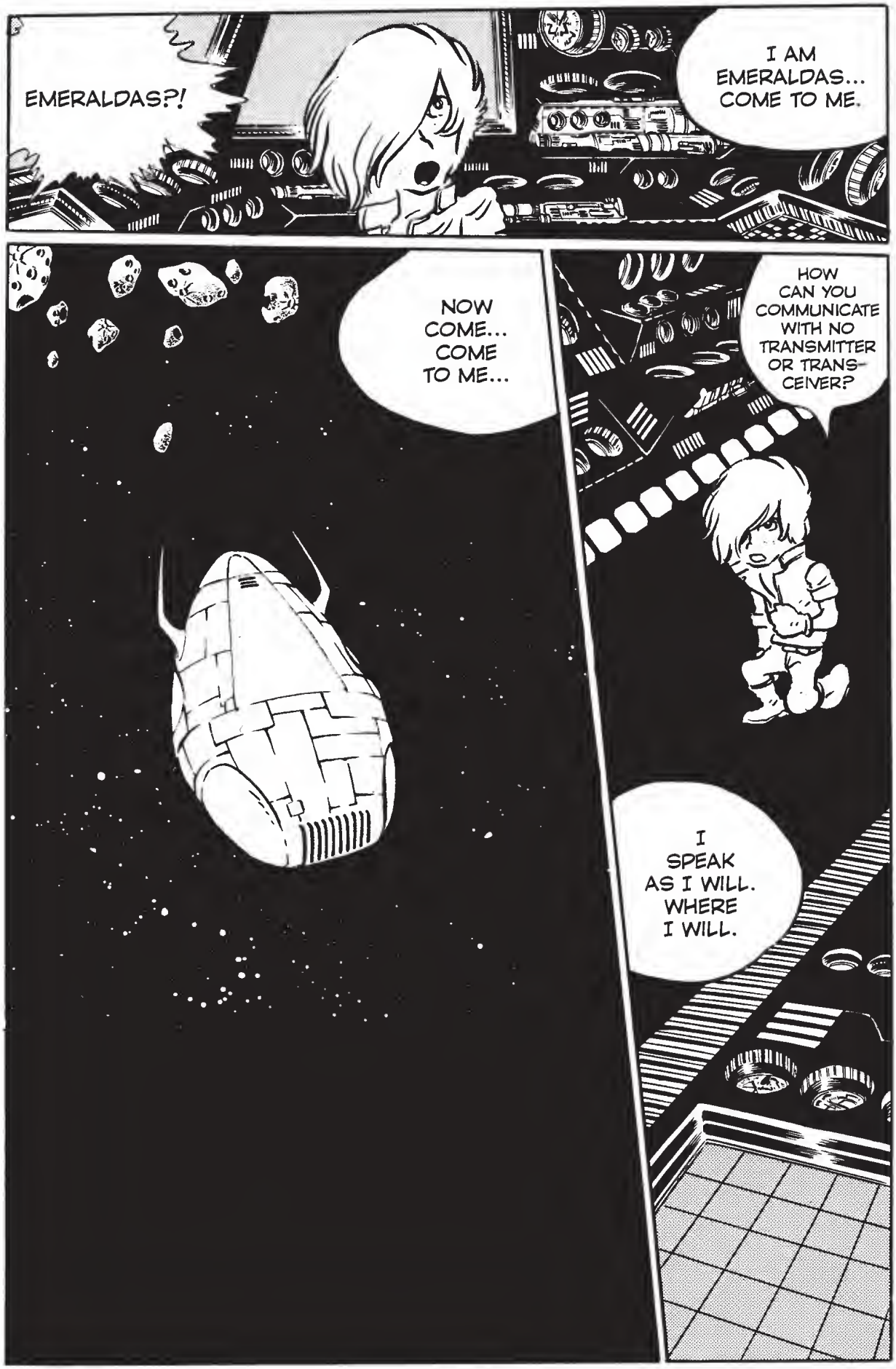

PEOPLE CONTENT TO LIVE ON THE SKIN OF A PLANET LOOK WITH CONTEMPT AND PITY AT THOSE WHO VENTURE INTO THE UNEXPLORED SEA OF STARS.

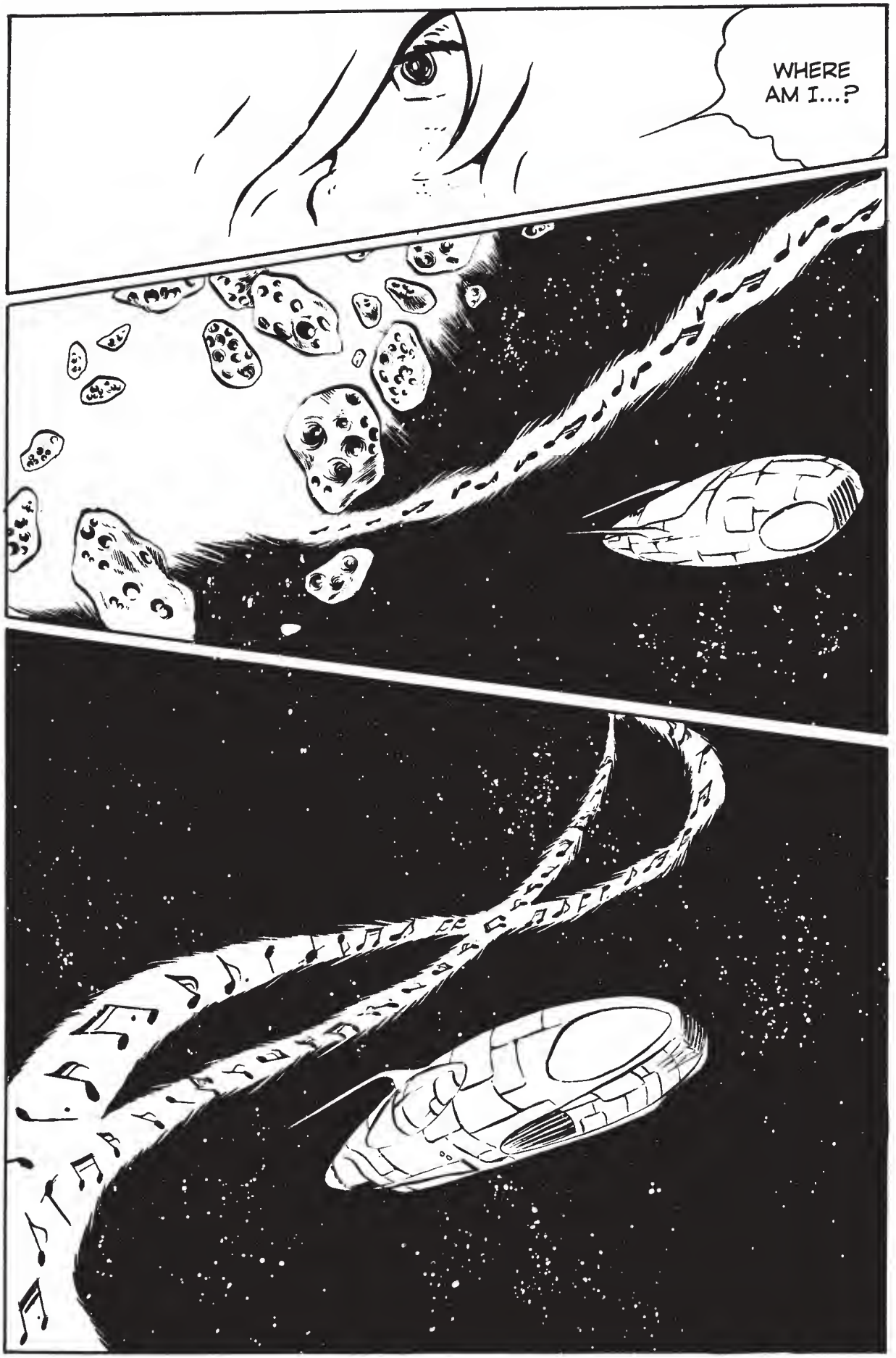
I AM EMERALDAS... AND I CAN NOT COMPREHEND THOSE BOUND BY GRAVITY, WHO CLING TO PLANETS LIKE MOSS HOLDING TIGHT TO A STONE...

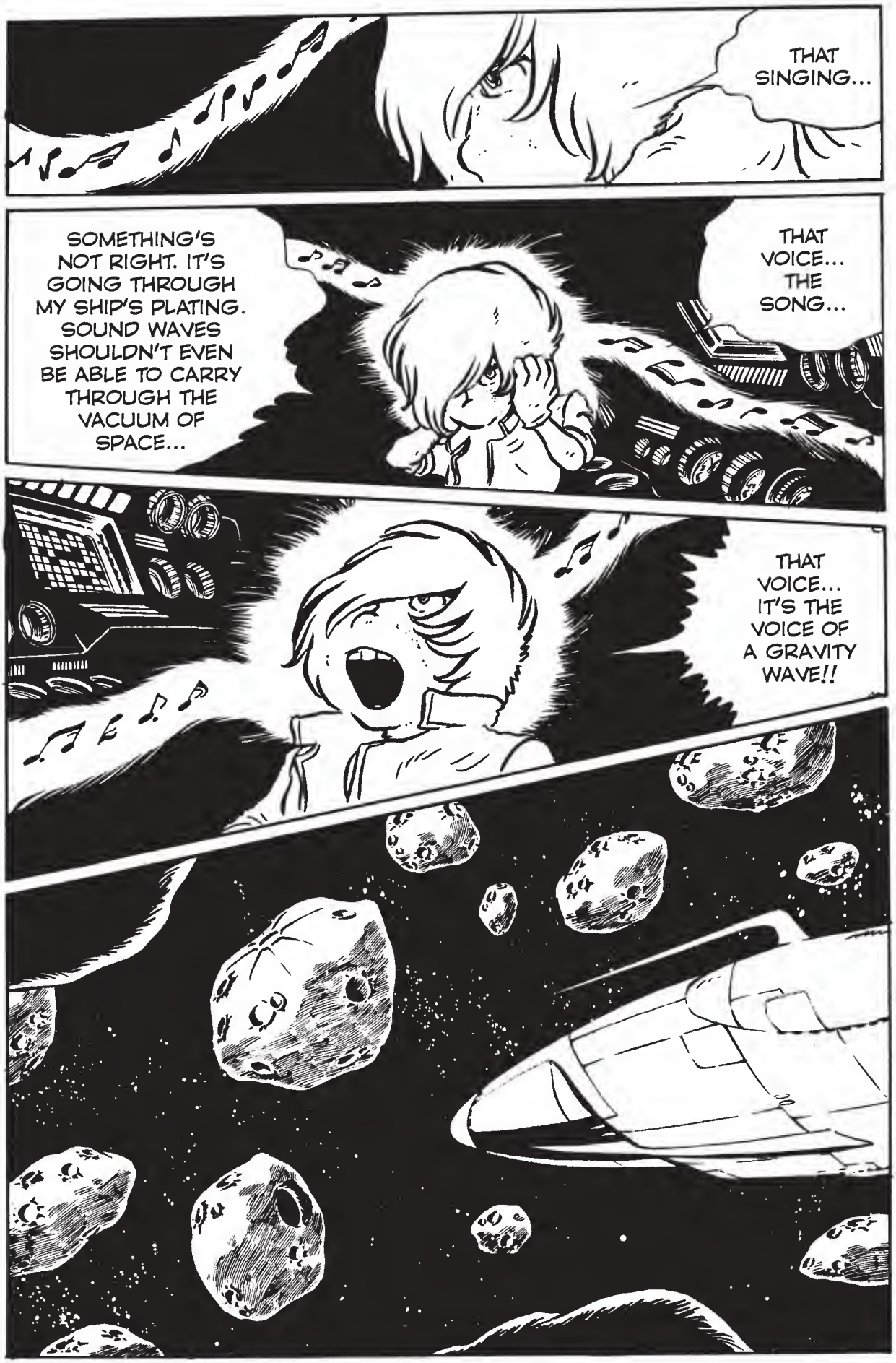
CHUG
CHUG
CHUG
CHUG
CHUG
CHUG
CHUG
CHUG
CHUG

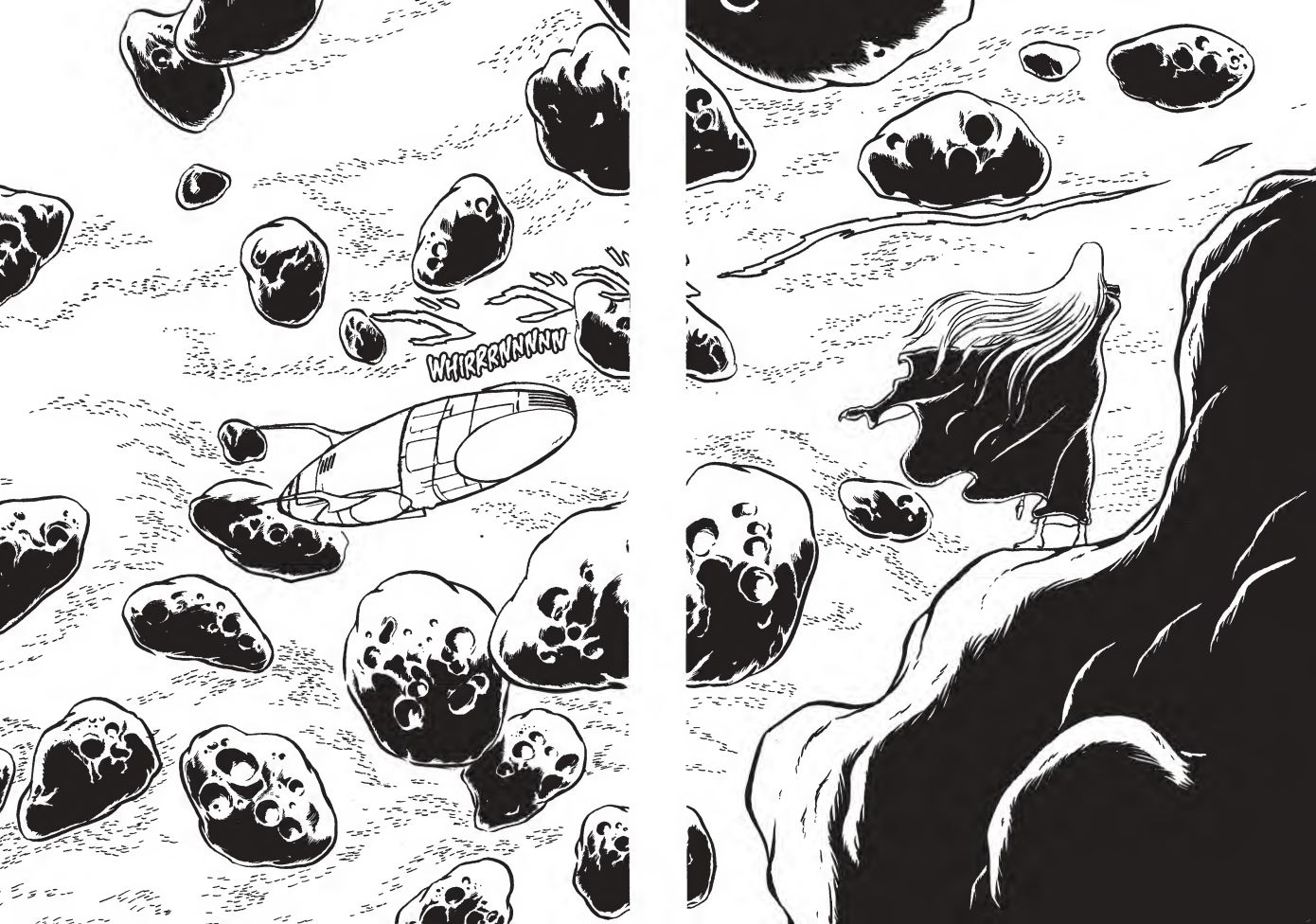

I ADMIT IT.
IT'S ALL WRONG. I BUILT THE SHIP BADLY.
NO SUCH LUCK.
RAMEL SAID THAT DEVICE WOULD LET ME FLY SAFELY.
Io
BZZZZTTT
I CAN COAST ON INERTIA, BUT I CAN'T CONTROL OR STEER.
DAMN... THE ENGINE QUIT...
I'LL JUST KEEP GOING FORWARD!! FOREVER!!
UNLESS I GET HOOKED BY SOME PLANET'S GRAVITY WELL...

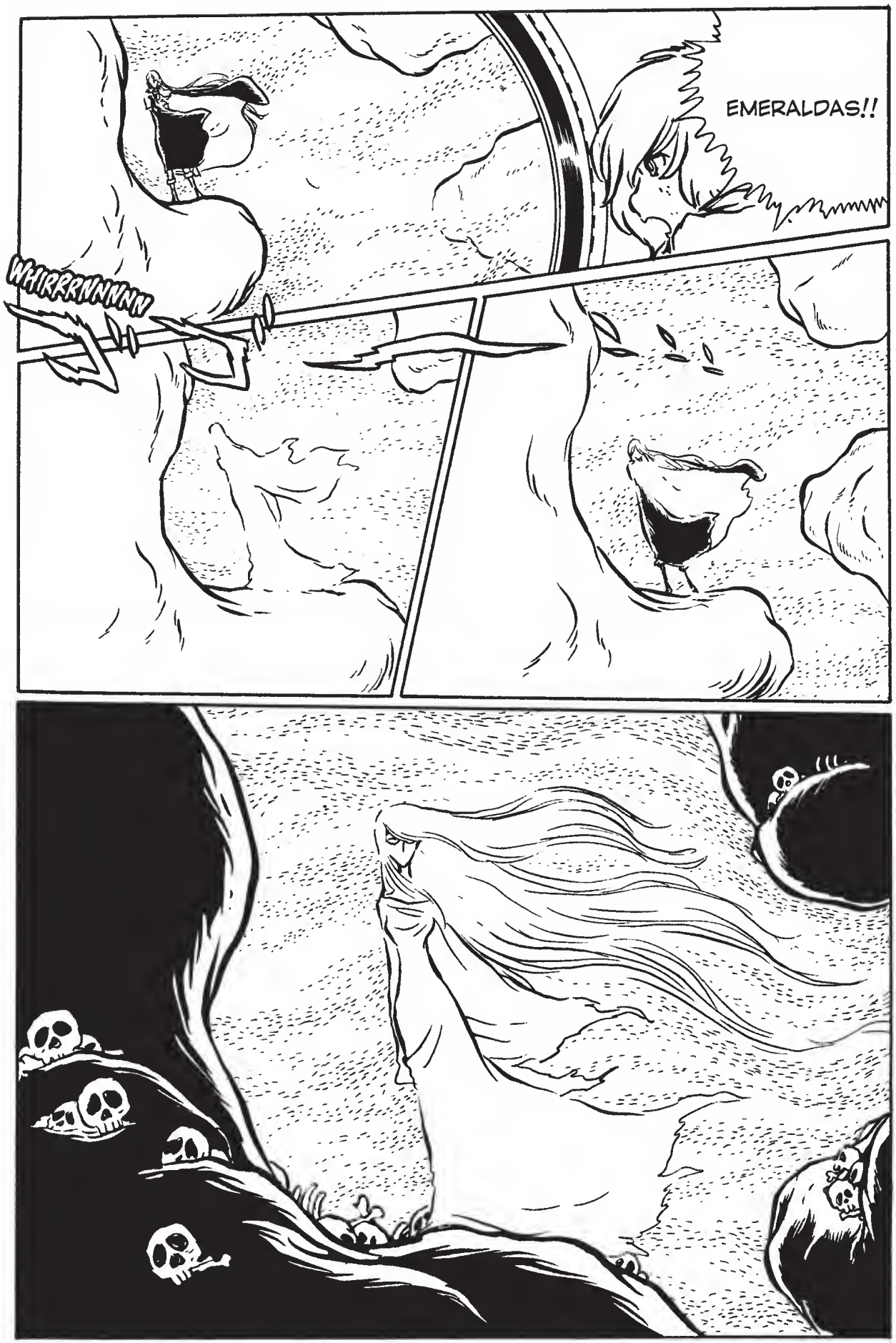

MY CURRENT POSITION ...
I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO.
FAT CHANCE.
I CAN'T MAKE OUT A THING ON THIS MAP!!
I CAN STILL SEE THE SUN...
WHICH MEANS MY GENERAL DIRECTION WOULD BE...
HIROSHI... COME OVER HERE...
WHO'S THERE?

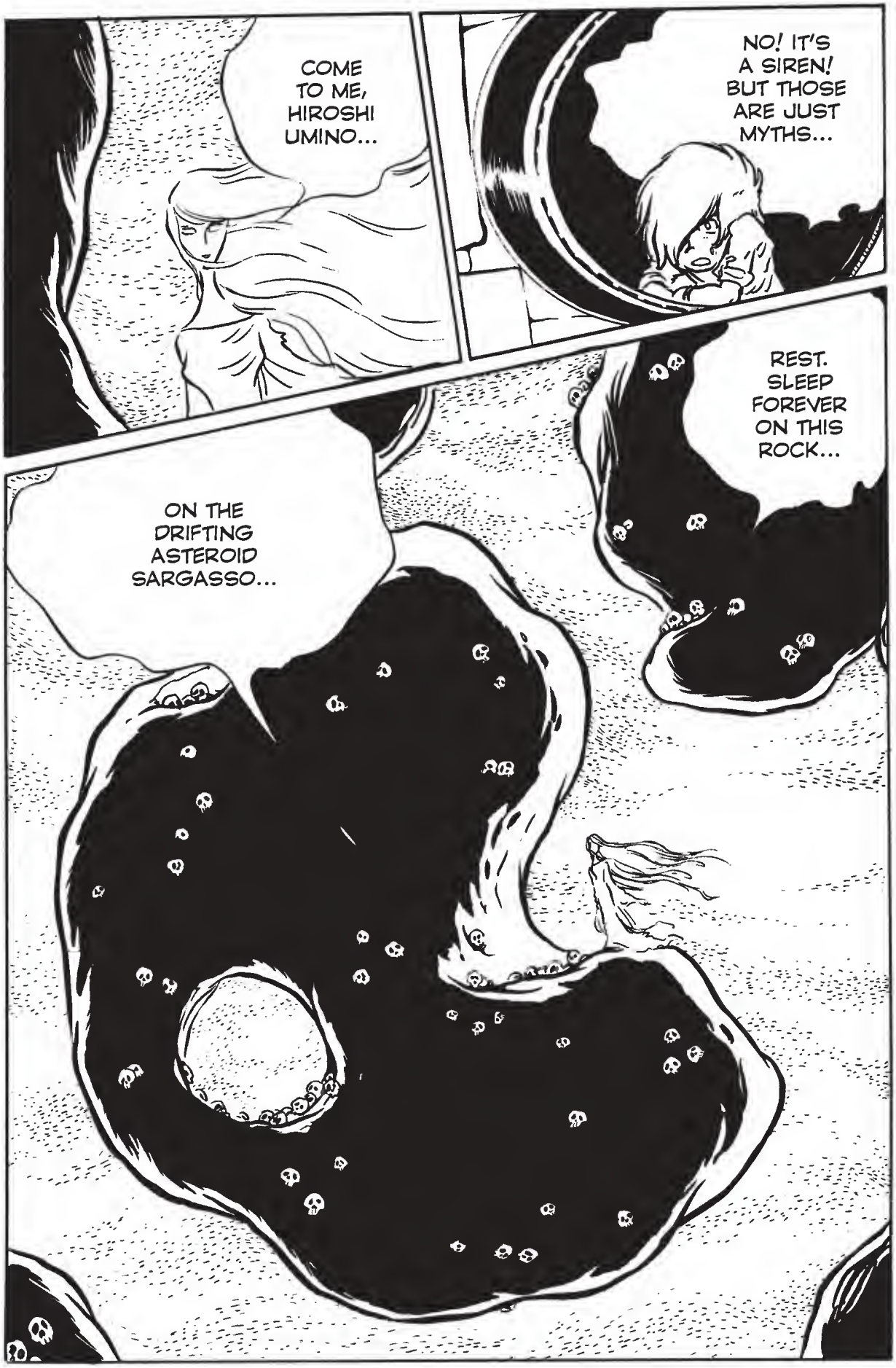

EMERALDAS?!
I AM EMERALDAS... COME TO ME.
NOW COME... COME TO ME...
HOW CAN YOU COMMUNICATE WITH NO TRANSMITTER OR TRANS-CEIVER?
I SPEAK AS I WILL. WHERE I WILL.


WHERE AM I...?

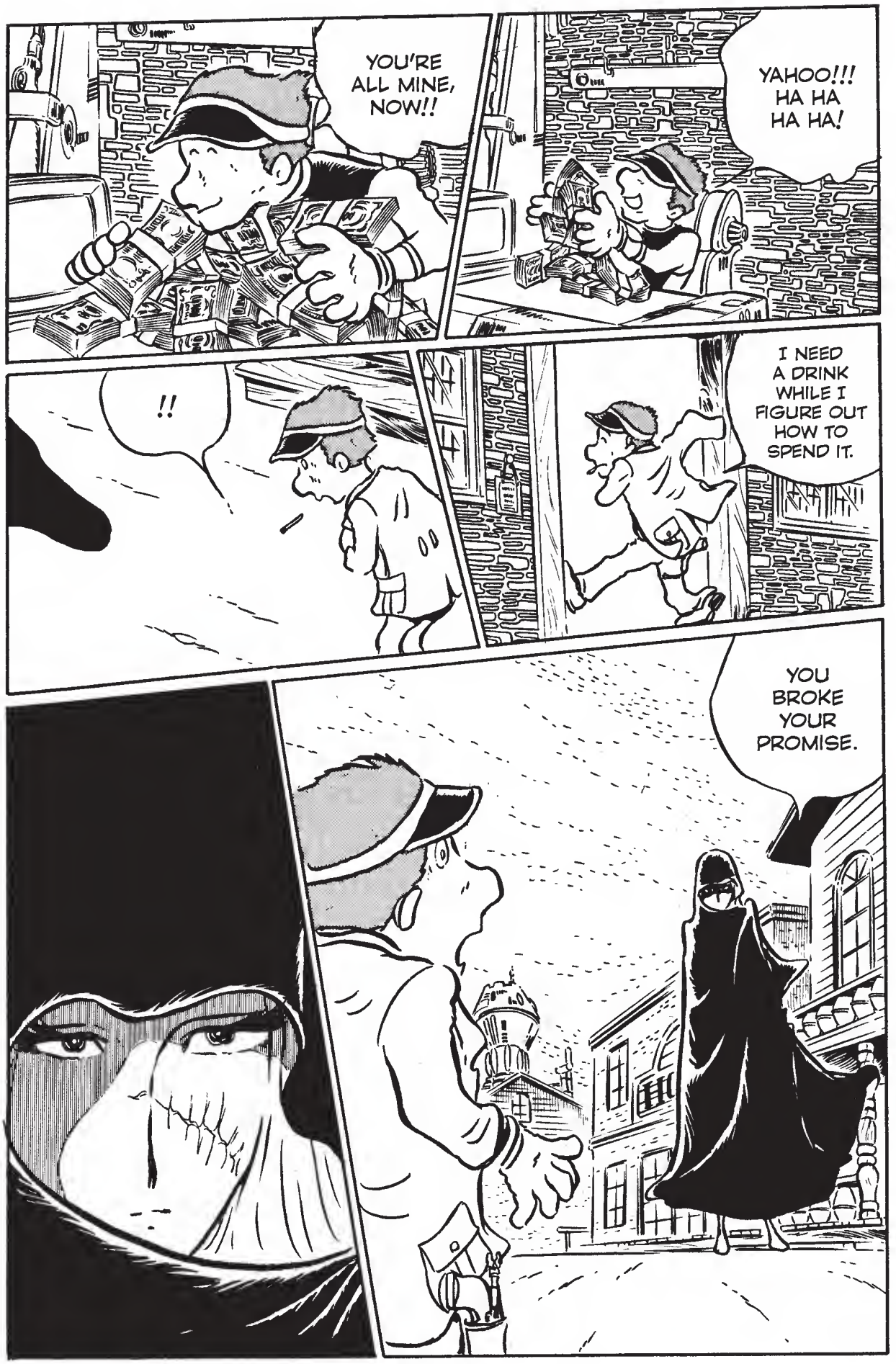

THAT SINGING...
SOMETHING'S NOT RIGHT. IT'S GOING THROUGH MY SHIP'S PLATING. SOUND WAVES SHOULDN'T EVEN BE ABLE TO CARRY THROUGH THE VACUUM OF SPACE...
THAT VOICE... THE SONG...
THAT VOICE... IT'S THE VOICE OF A GRAVITY WAVE!!

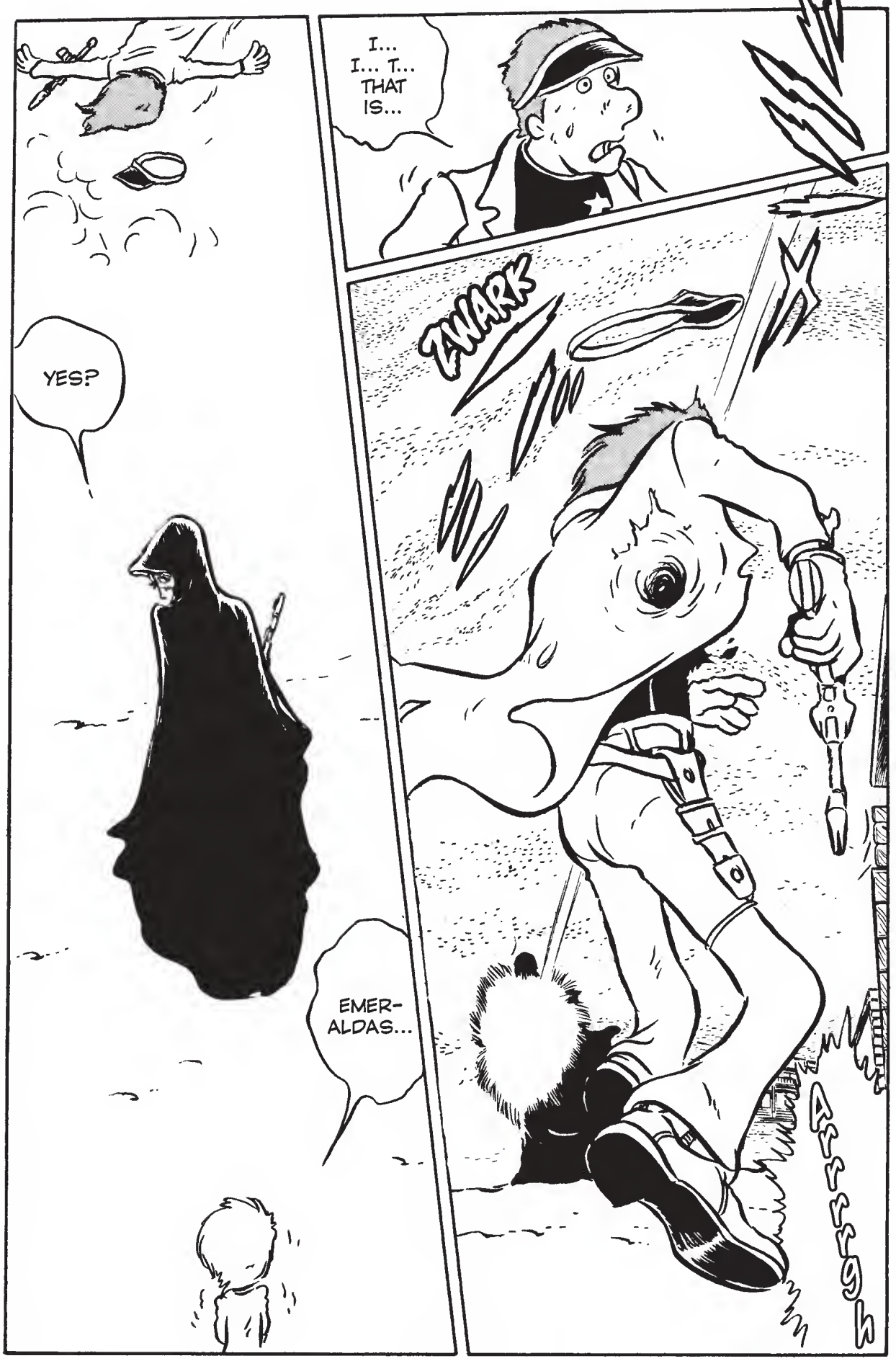

WHIRRRINNNN

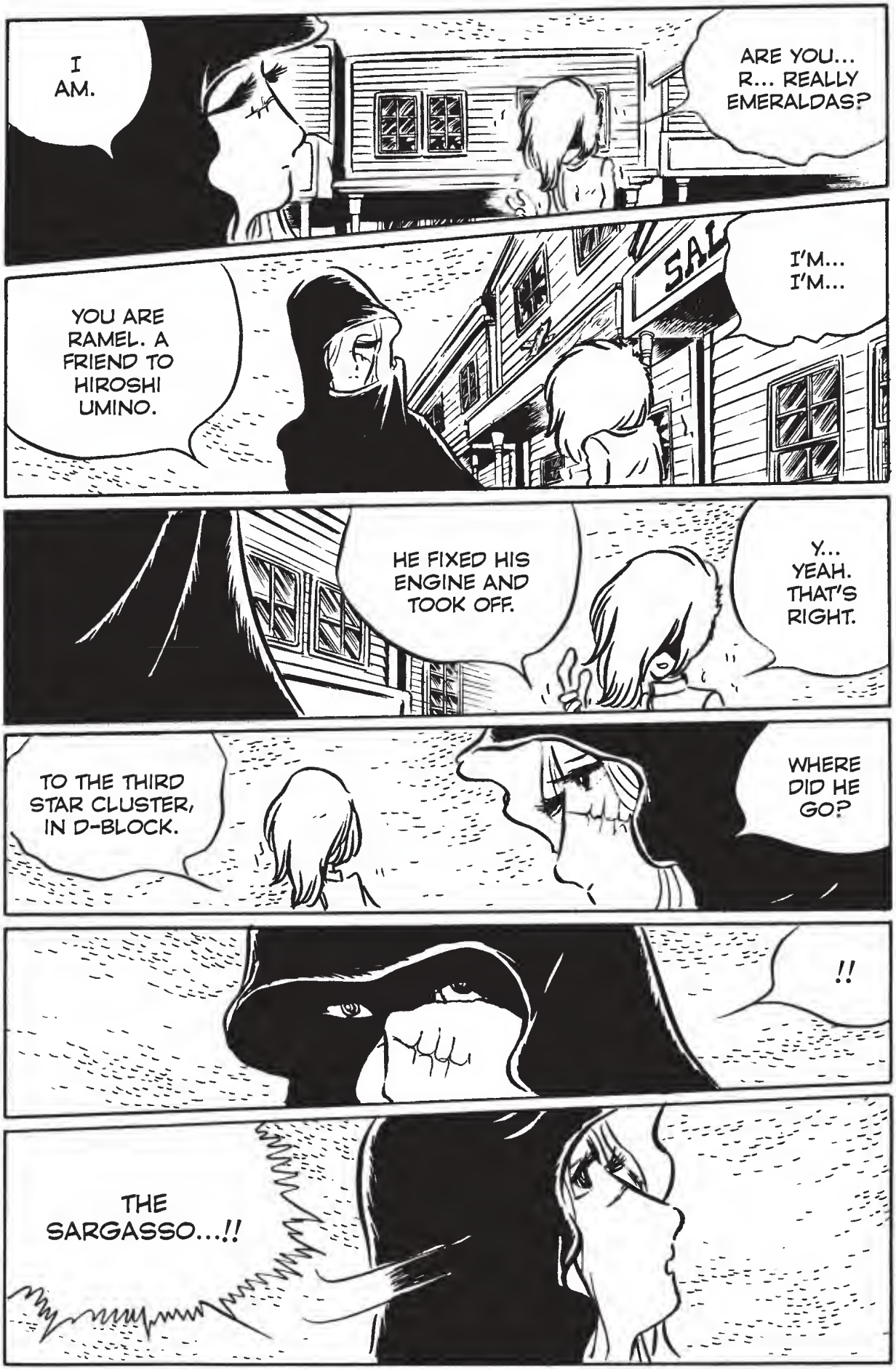

EMERALDAS!!
WHIRRNNNNN

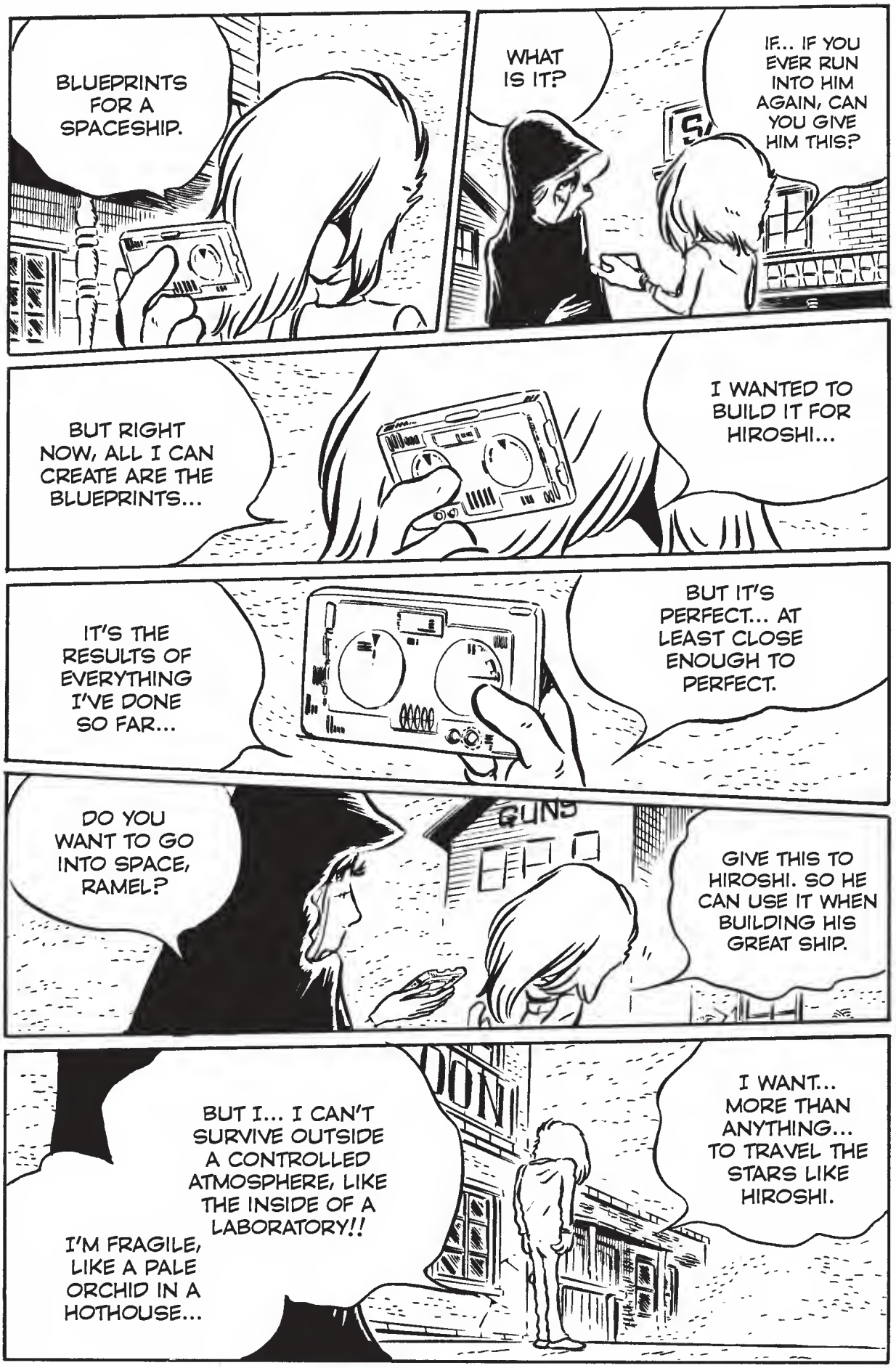

COME TO ME, HIROSHI UMINO...
NO! IT'S A SIREN! BUT THOSE ARE JUST MYTHS...
REST. SLEEP FOREVER ON THIS ROCK...
ON THE DRIFTING ASTEROID SARGASSO...

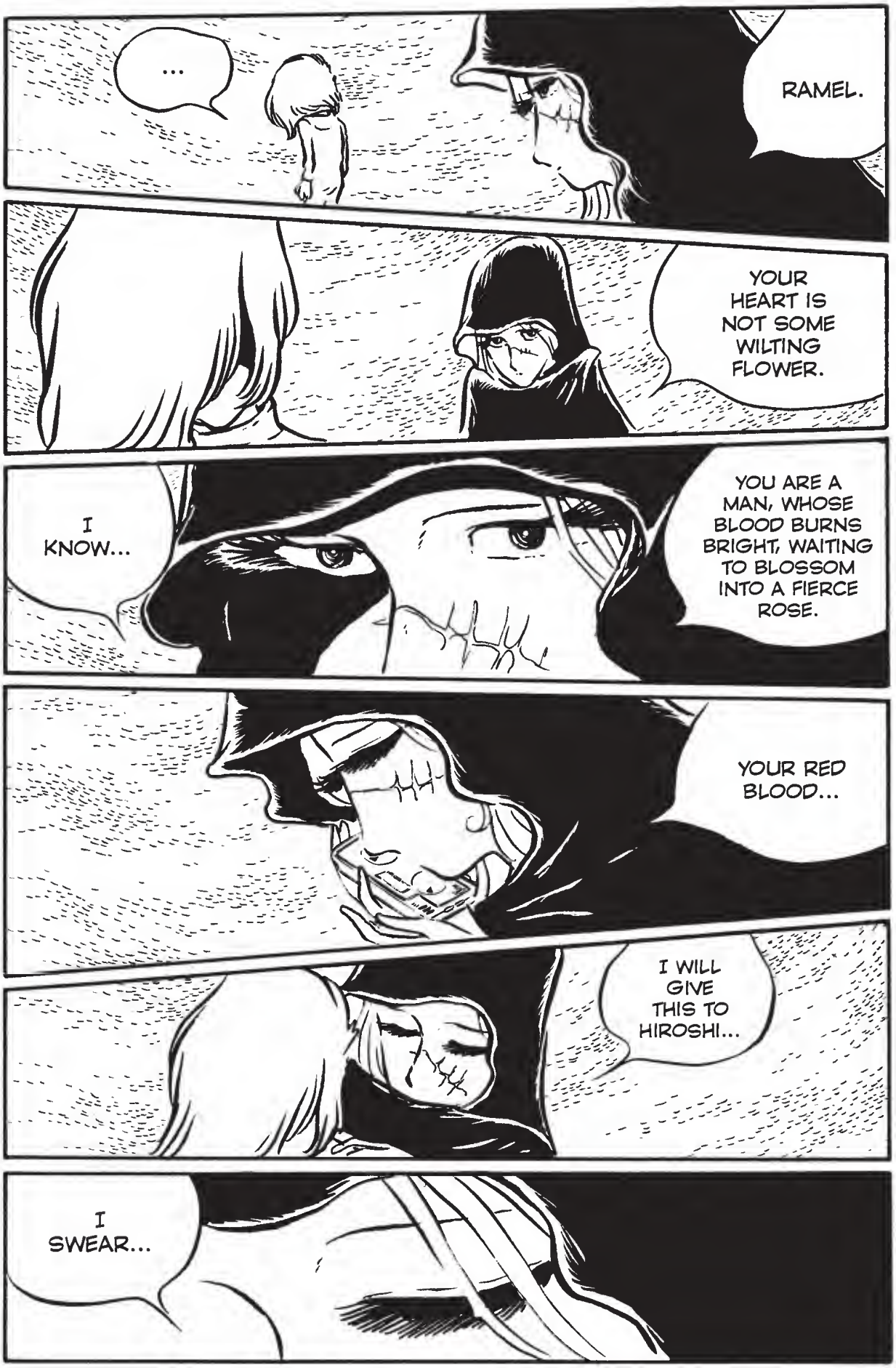
GRRRRNNNN

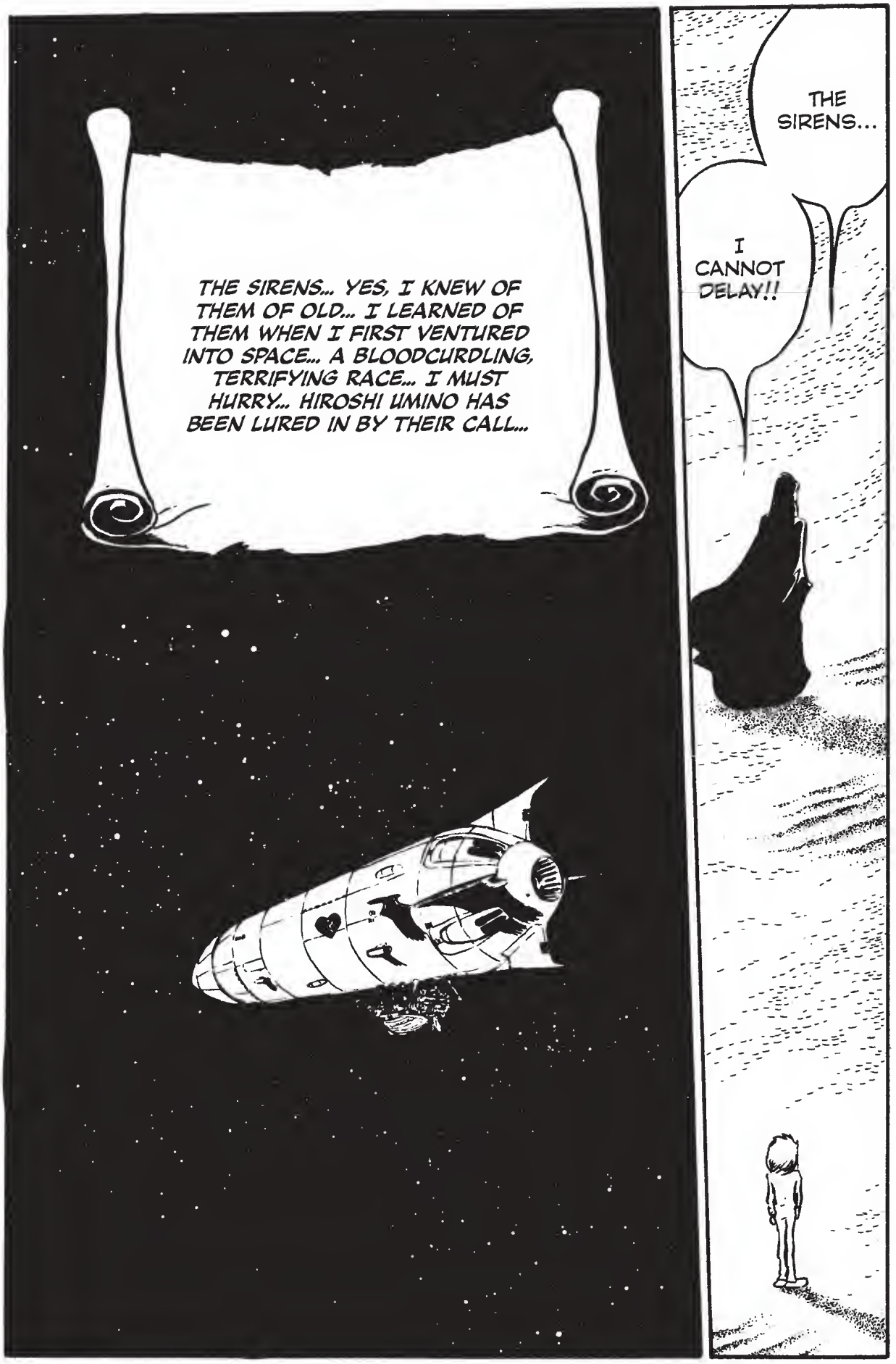

YOU'RE ALL MINE, NOW!!
YAHOO!!! HA HA HA HA!
!!
I NEED A DRINK WHILE I FIGURE OUT HOW TO SPEND IT.
YOU BROKE YOUR PROMISE.


I...
I... T...
THAT
IS...
ZWARK
YES?
EMER-
ALDAS...
AGGGGH


I AM.
ARE YOU... R... REALLY EMERALDAS?
YOU ARE RAMEL. A FRIEND TO HIROSHI UMINO.
I'M... I'M...
HE FIXED HIS ENGINE AND TOOK OFF.
Y... YEAH. THAT'S RIGHT.
TO THE THIRD STAR CLUSTER, IN D-BLOCK.
WHERE DID HE GO?
!!
THE SARGASSO...!!

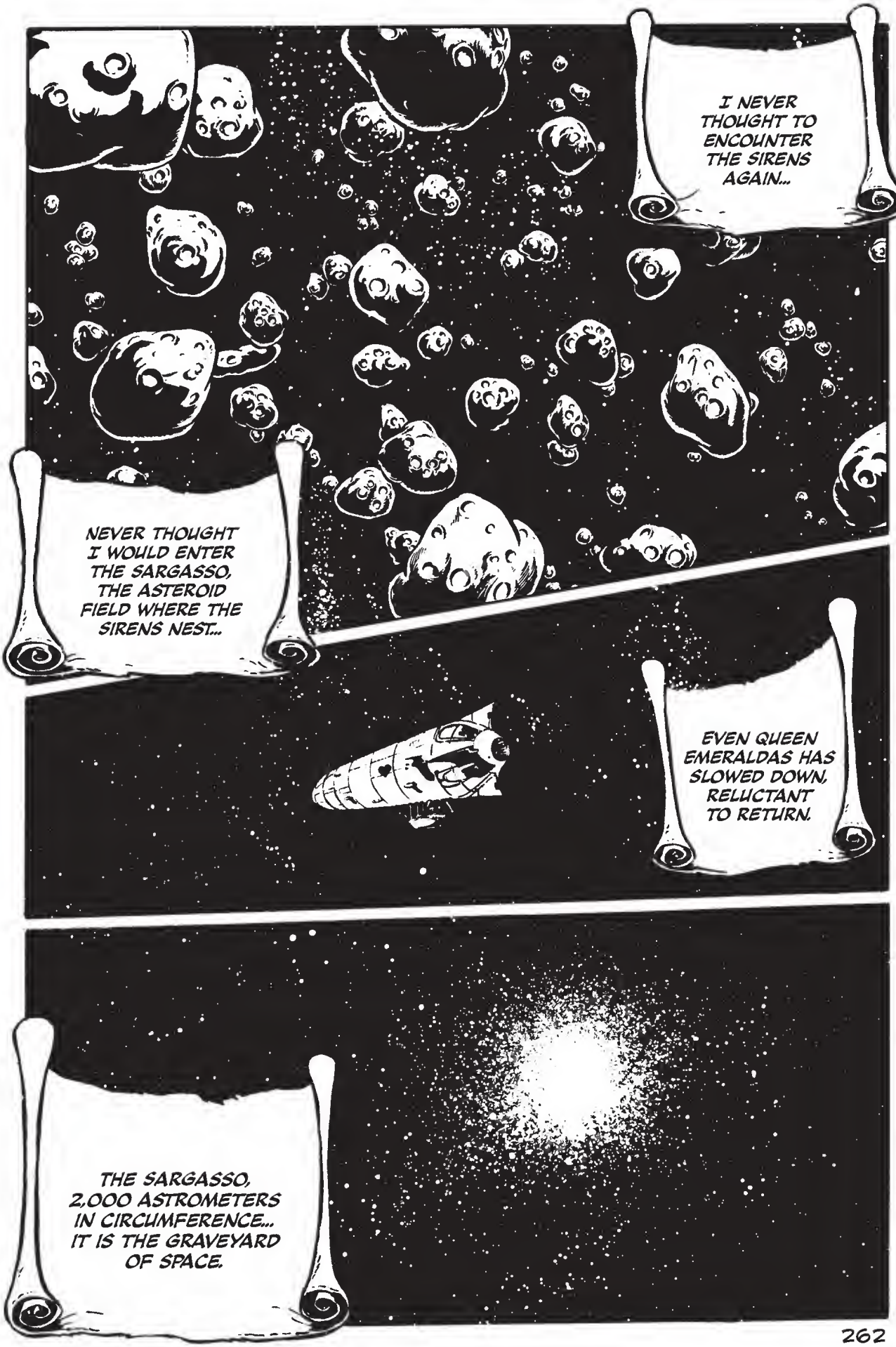

BLUEPRINTS FOR A SPACESHIP.
WHAT IS IT?
IF... IF YOU EVER RUN INTO HIM AGAIN, CAN YOU GIVE HIM THIS?
BUT RIGHT NOW, ALL I CAN CREATE ARE THE BLUEPRINTS...
I WANTED TO BUILD IT FOR HIROSHI...
IT'S THE RESULTS OF EVERYTHING I'VE DONE SO FAR...
BUT IT'S PERFECT... AT LEAST CLOSE ENOUGH TO PERFECT.
DO YOU WANT TO GO INTO SPACE, RAMEL?
GUNS
GIVE THIS TO HIROSHI. SO HE CAN USE IT WHEN BUILDING HIS GREAT SHIP.
I'M FRAGILE, LIKE A PALE ORCHID IN A HOTHOUSE...
BUT I... I CAN'T SURVIVE OUTSIDE A CONTROLLED ATMOSPHERE, LIKE THE INSIDE OF A LABORATORY!!
I WANT... MORE THAN ANYTHING... TO TRAVEL THE STARS LIKE HIROSHI.


...
RAMEL.
YOUR HEART IS NOT SOME WILTING FLOWER.
I KNOW...
YOU ARE A MAN, WHOSE BLOOD BURNS BRIGHT, WAITING TO BLOSSOM INTO A FIERCE ROSE.
YOUR RED BLOOD...
I WILL GIVE THIS TO HIROSHI...
I SWEAR...


THE SIRENS... YES, I KNEW OF THEM OF OLD... I LEARNED OF THEM WHEN I FIRST VENTURED INTO SPACE... A BLOODCURDLING, TERRIFYING RACE... I MUST HURRY... HIROSHI UMINO HAS BEEN LURED IN BY THEIR CALL...
THE SIRENS...
I CANNOT DELAY!!

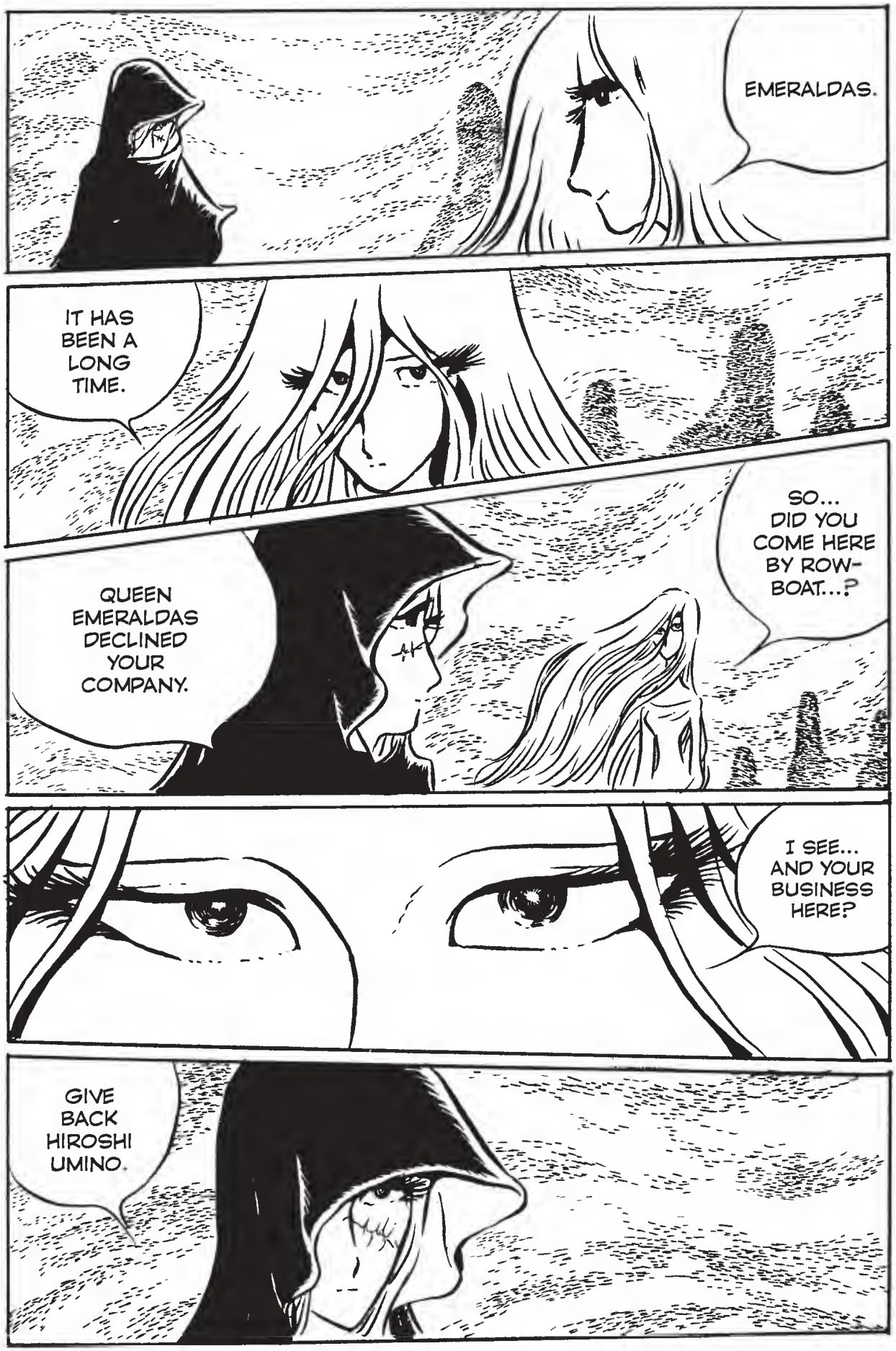
THERE ARE MANY WHO HAVE HEARD OF THE SIRENS, BUT NONE WHOM HAVE ACTUALLY SEEN THEM. FOR NONE HAVE MET THE SIRENS AND LIVED TO TELL THE TALE...

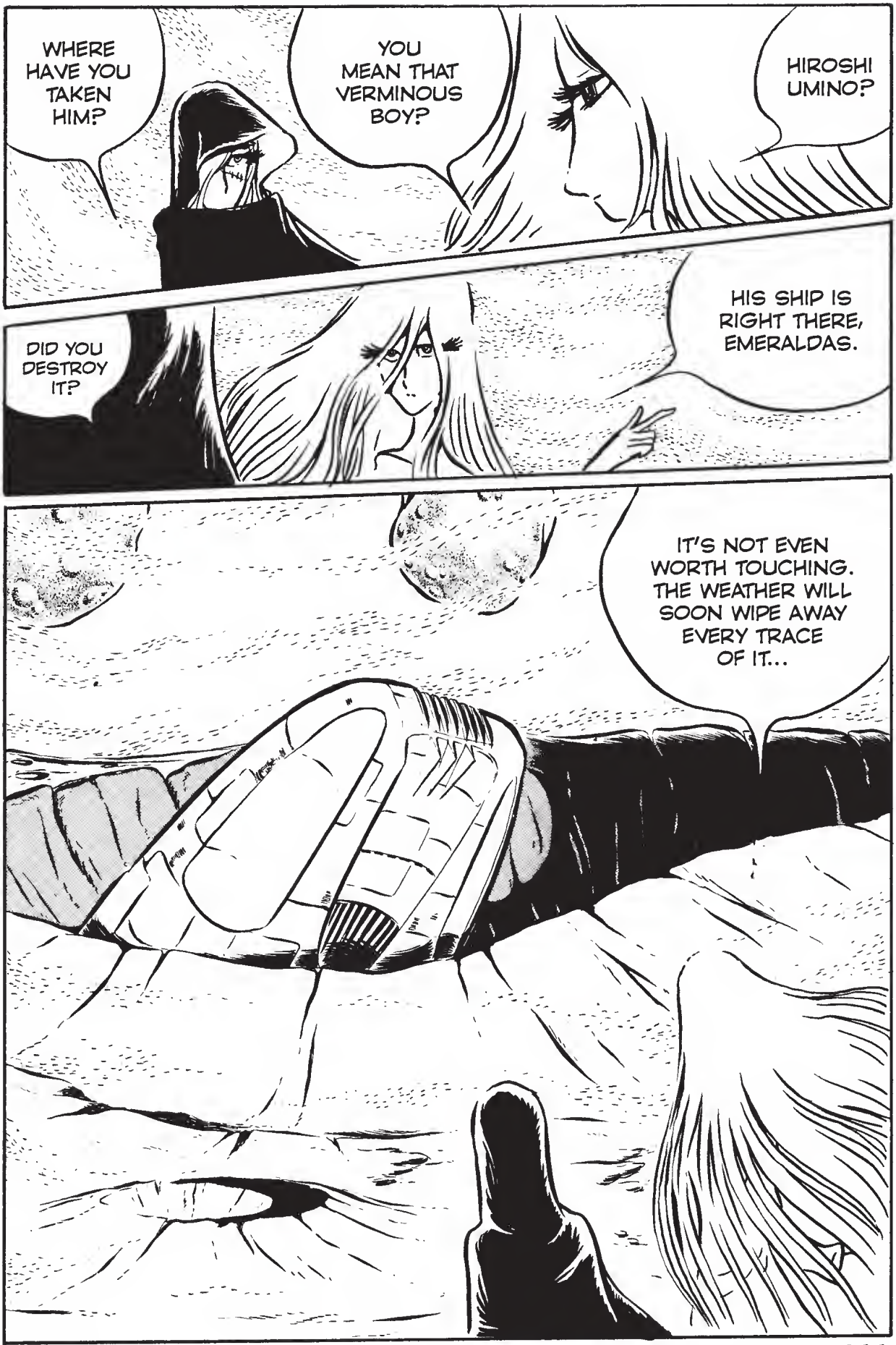
EXCEPT ME, EMERALDAS. I MAY BE THE ONLY PERSON TO HAVE ENCOUNTERED THE SIRENS AND GOTTEN AWAY...

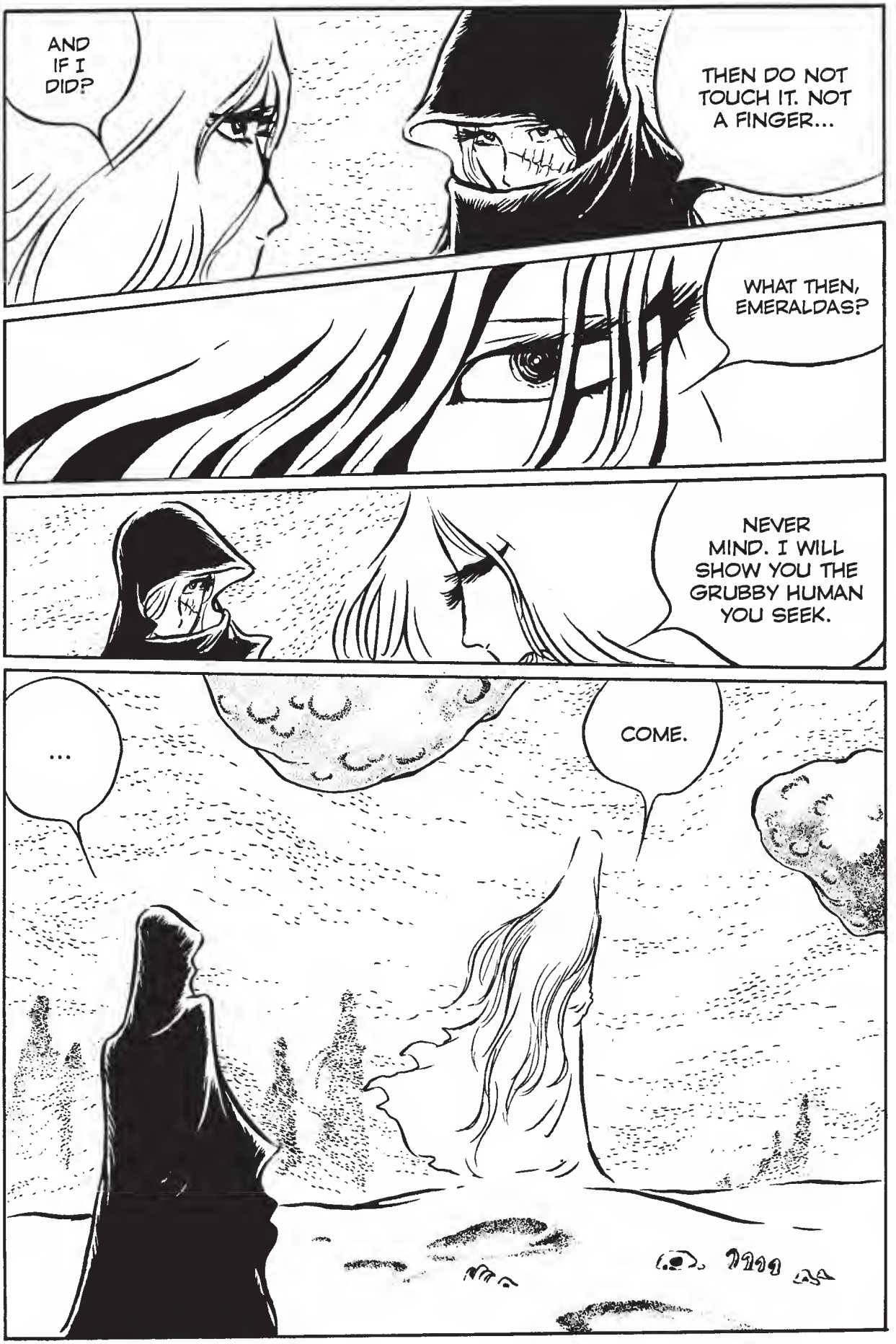

I NEVER THOUGHT TO ENCOUNTER THE SIRENS AGAIN...
NEVER THOUGHT I WOULD ENTER THE SARGASSO, THE ASTEROID FIELD WHERE THE SIRENS NEST...
EVEN QUEEN EMERALDAS HAS SLOWED DOWN, RELUCTANT TO RETURN.
THE SARGASSO, 2,000 ASTROMETERS IN CIRCUMFERENCE... IT IS THE GRAVEYARD OF SPACE.

SOMETIMES WEEPING. SOMETIMES CRUELLY LAUGHING. THE VOICE OF THE SIRENS PERMEATES THIS PLACE...
AHHHEEEOOOOOOO

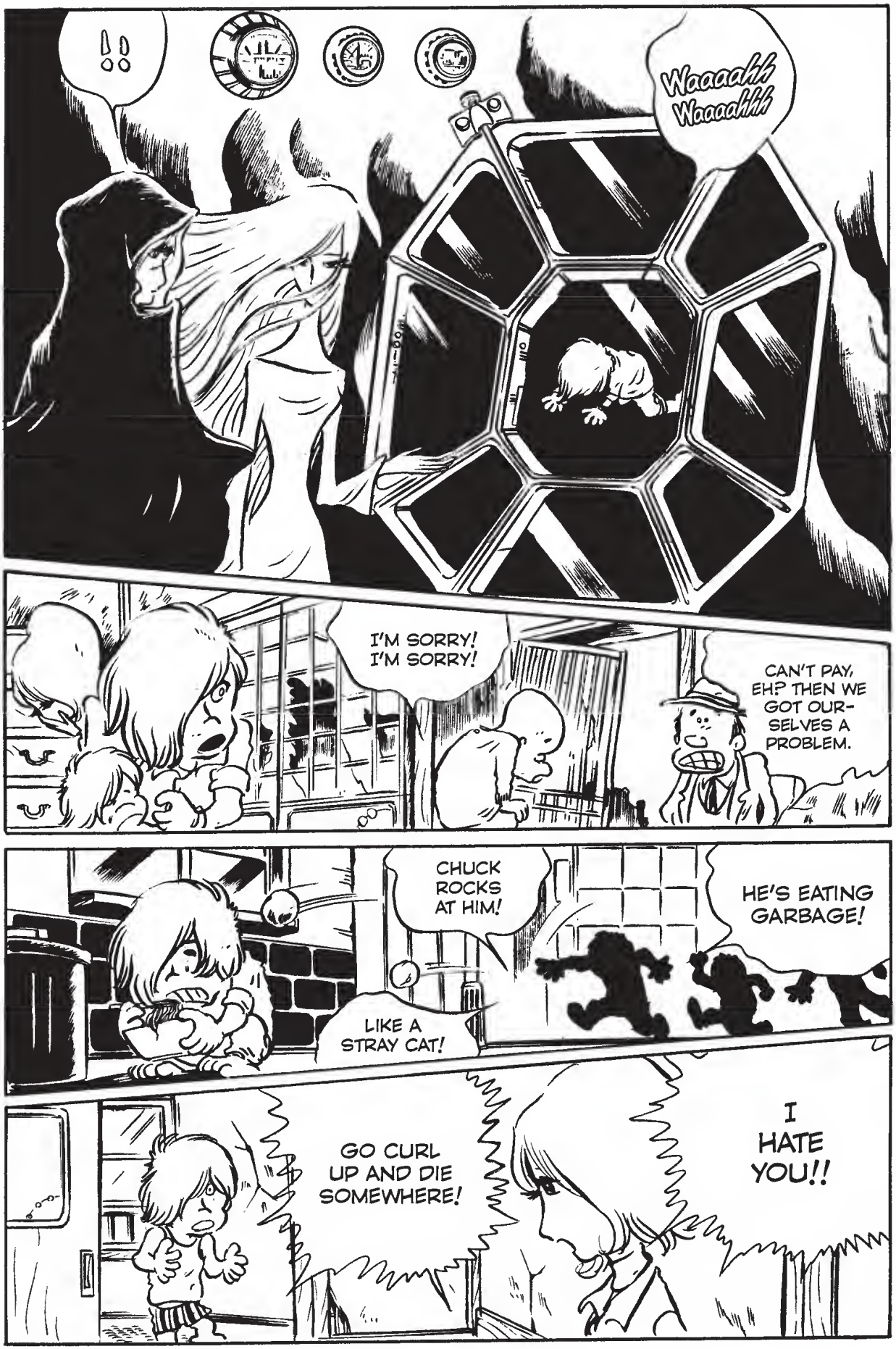
EMER-
ALDAS
COMES!
EMERALDAS
COMES!
EMERALDAS
COMES!
EMERALDAS?
AHHHEEEOOOOOOO

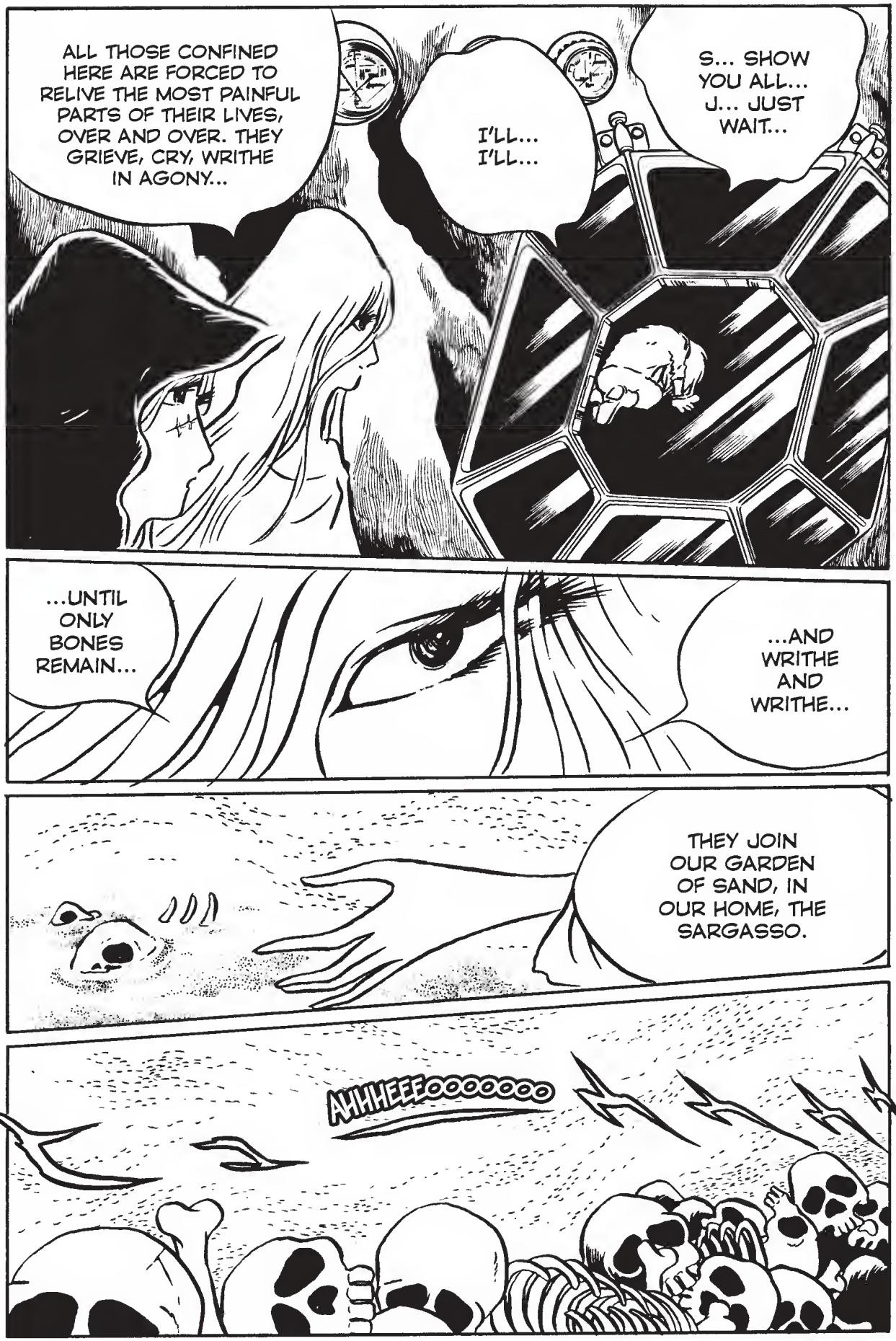

EMERALDAS.
IT HAS BEEN A LONG TIME.
SO... DID YOU COME HERE BY ROW-BOAT...?
QUEEN EMERALDAS DECLINED YOUR COMPANY.
I SEE... AND YOUR BUSINESS HERE?
GIVE BACK HIROSHI UMINO.

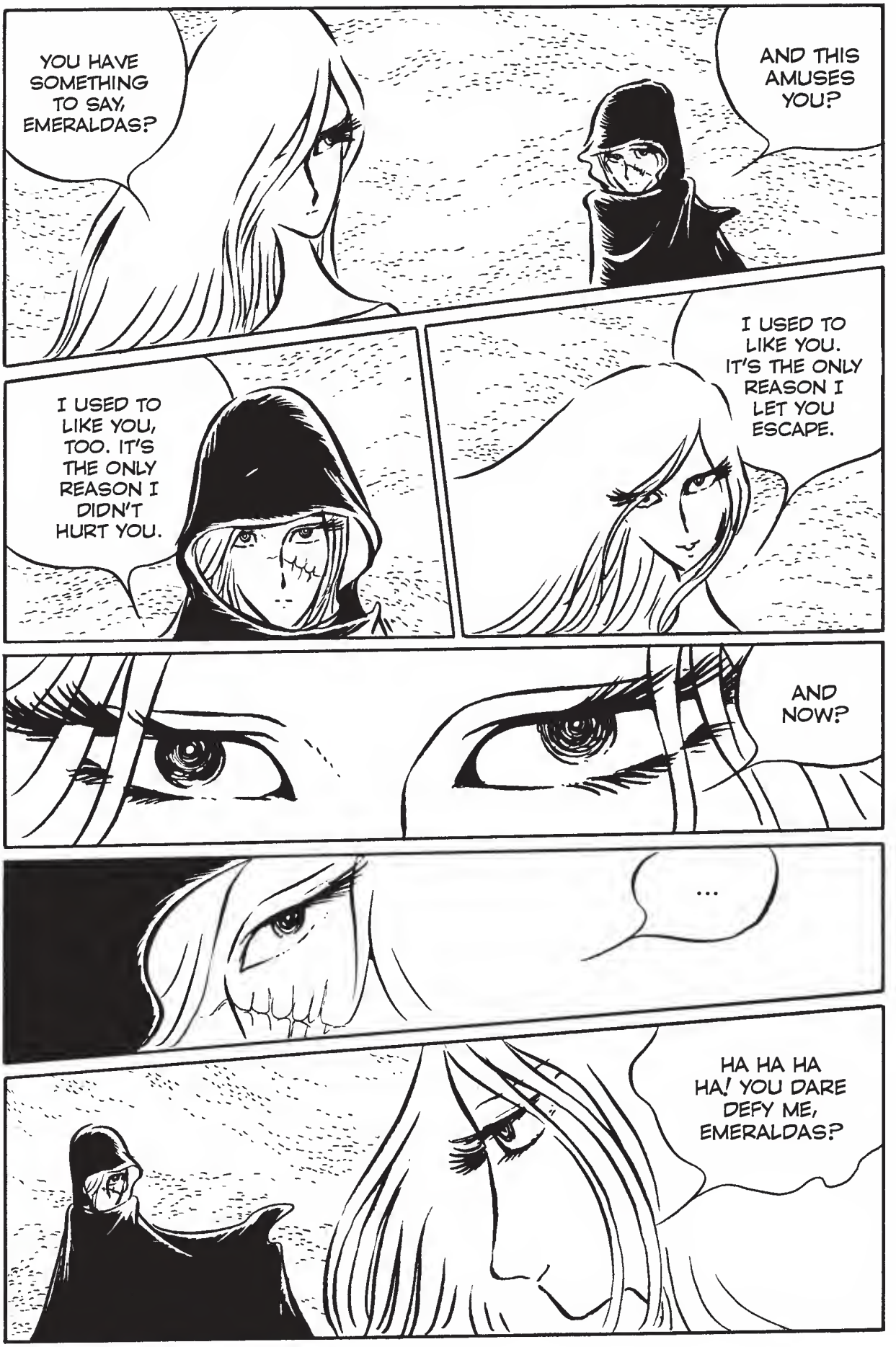

WHERE HAVE YOU TAKEN HIM?
YOU MEAN THAT VERMINOUS BOY?
HIROSHI UMINO?
DID YOU DESTROY IT?
HIS SHIP IS RIGHT THERE, EMERALDAS.
IT'S NOT EVEN WORTH TOUCHING. THE WEATHER WILL SOON WIPE AWAY EVERY TRACE OF IT...

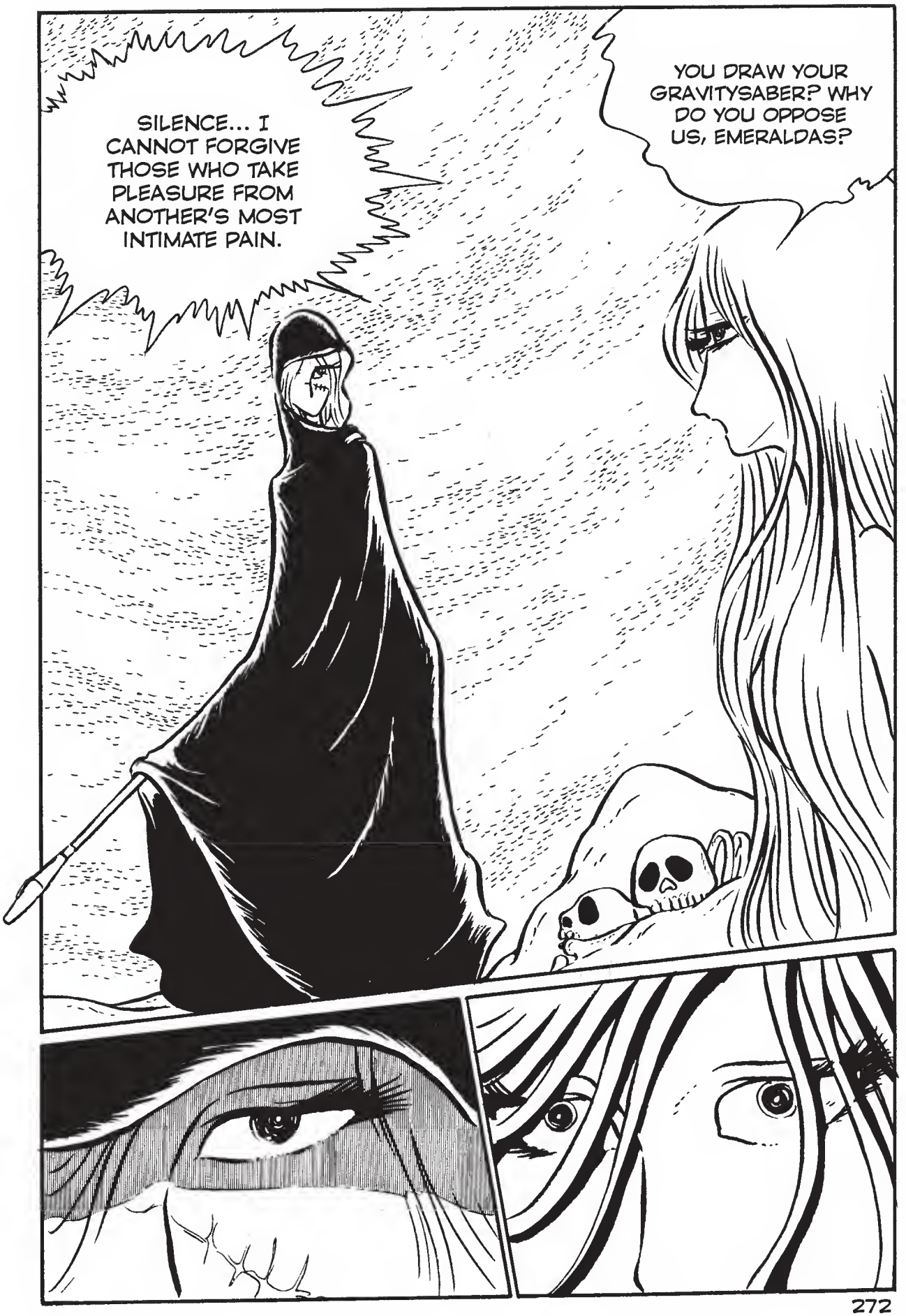

AND IF I DID?
THEN DO NOT TOUCH IT. NOT A FINGER...
WHAT THEN, EMERALDAS?
NEVER MIND. I WILL SHOW YOU THE GRUBBY HUMAN YOU SEEK.
...
COME.

TRANSPARENT STONE?
WE CONFINED HIM BEHIND A DOOR OF TRANSPARENT STONE. HE STRUGGLES. HE STRUGGLES AND CRIES.

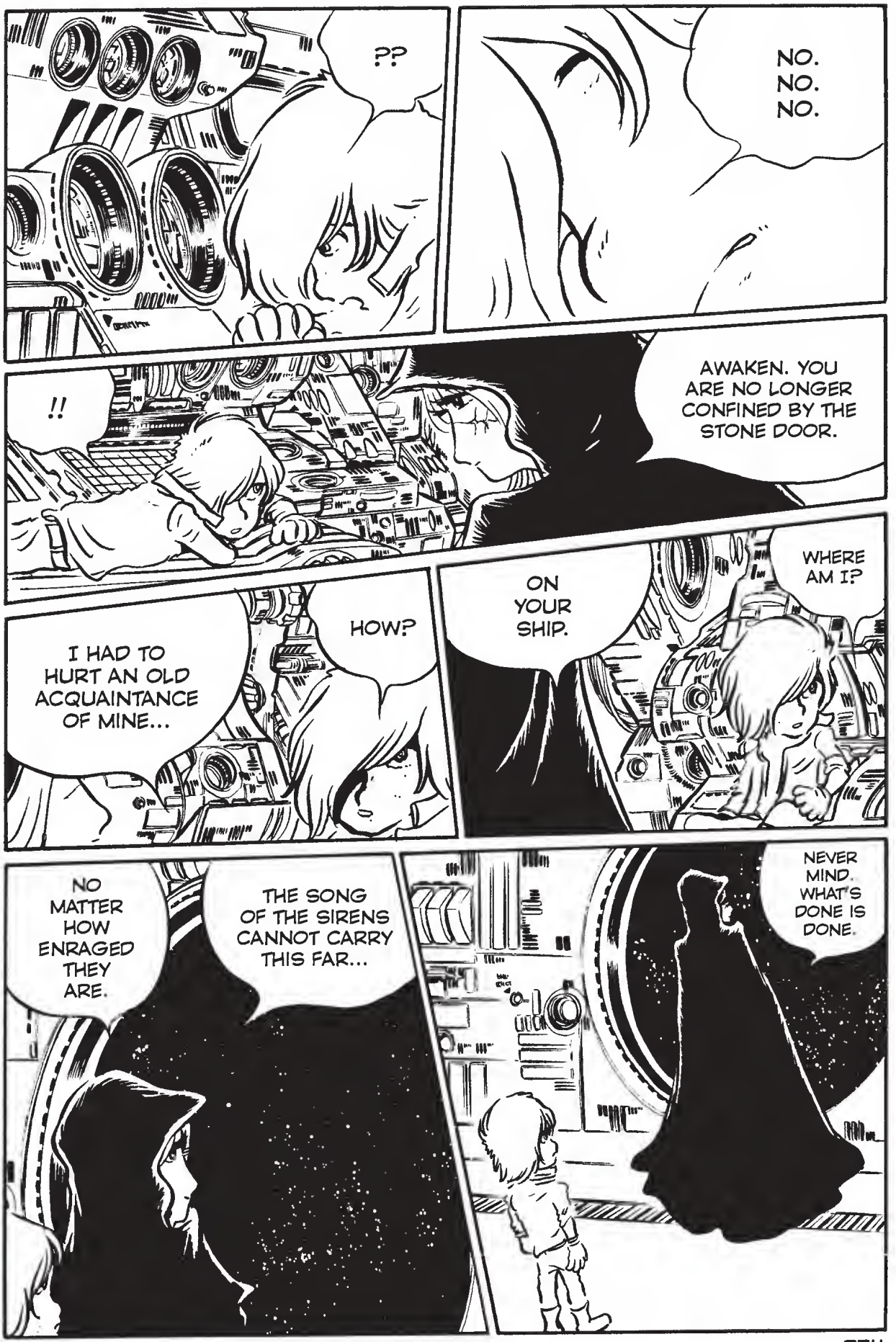

!!
Waaaahh Waaaahhh
I'M SORRY! I'M SORRY!
CAN'T PAY, EH? THEN WE GOT OURSELVES A PROBLEM.
CHUCK ROCKS AT HIM!
HE'S EATING GARBAGE!
LIKE A STRAY CAT!
GO CURL UP AND DIE SOMEWHERE!
I HATE YOU!!

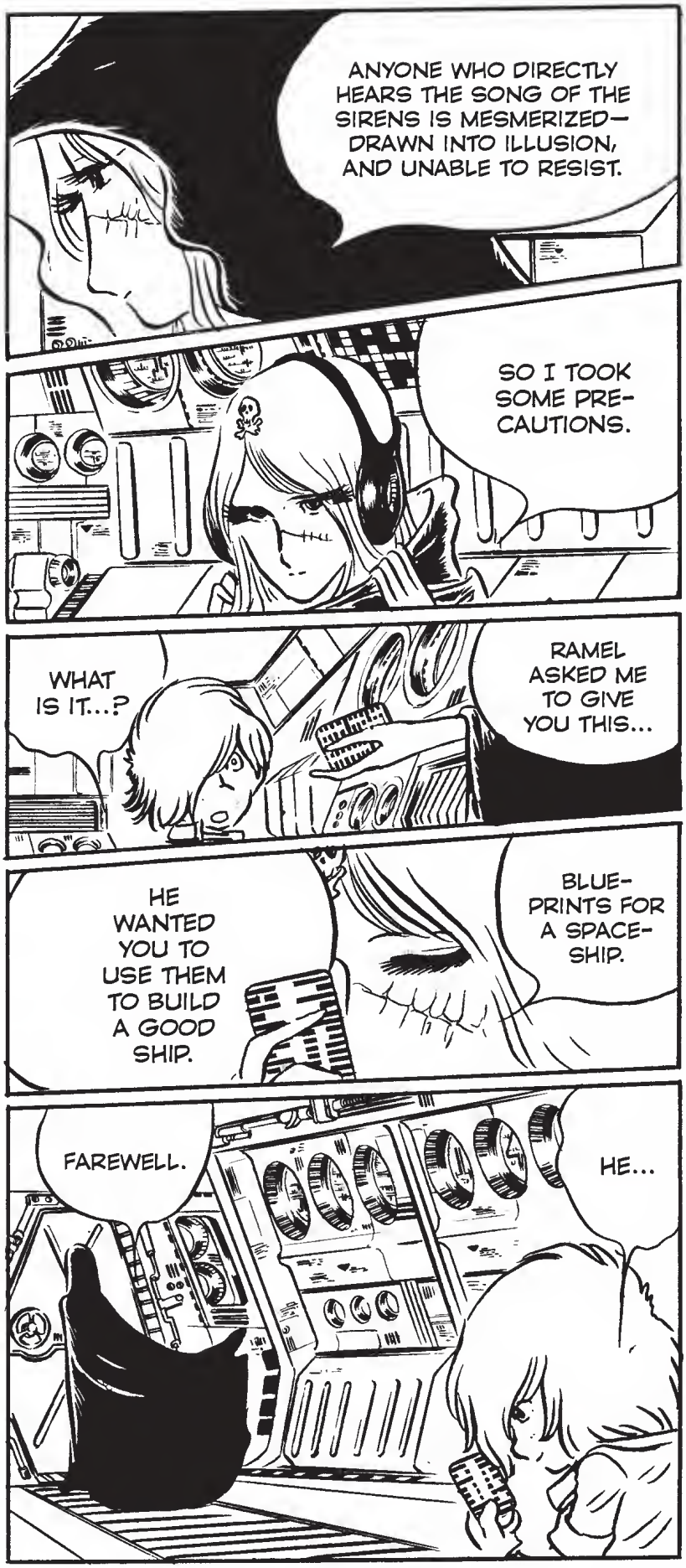

ALL THOSE CONFINED HERE ARE FORCED TO RELIVE THE MOST PAINFUL PARTS OF THEIR LIVES, OVER AND OVER. THEY GRIEVE, CRY, WRITHE IN AGONY...
I'LL... I'LL...
S... SHOW YOU ALL... J... JUST WAIT...
...UNTIL ONLY BONES REMAIN...
...AND WRITHE AND WRITHE...
THEY JOIN OUR GARDEN OF SAND, IN OUR HOME, THE SARGASSO.
AHHHEEEOOOOOOO

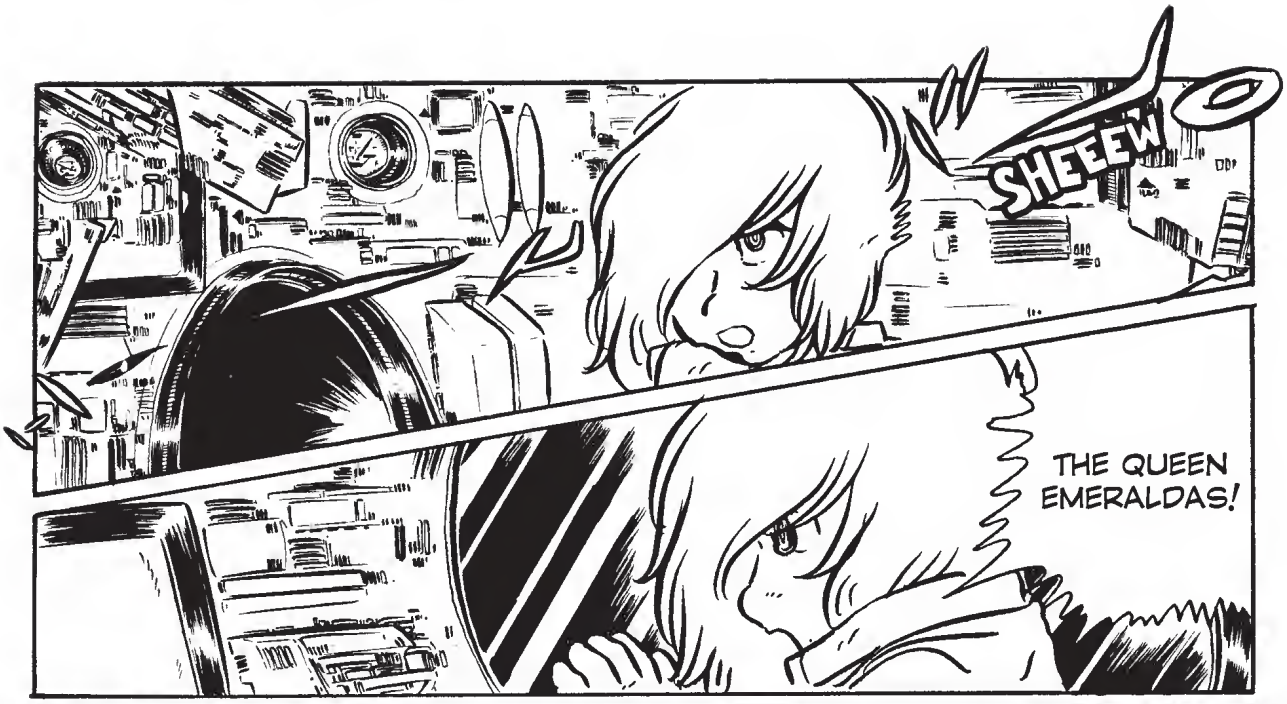

YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY, EMERALDAS?
AND THIS AMUSES YOU?
I USED TO LIKE YOU. IT'S THE ONLY REASON I LET YOU ESCAPE.
I USED TO LIKE YOU, TOO. IT'S THE ONLY REASON I DIDN'T HURT YOU.
AND NOW?
...
HA HA HA HA! YOU DARE DEFY ME, EMERALDAS?

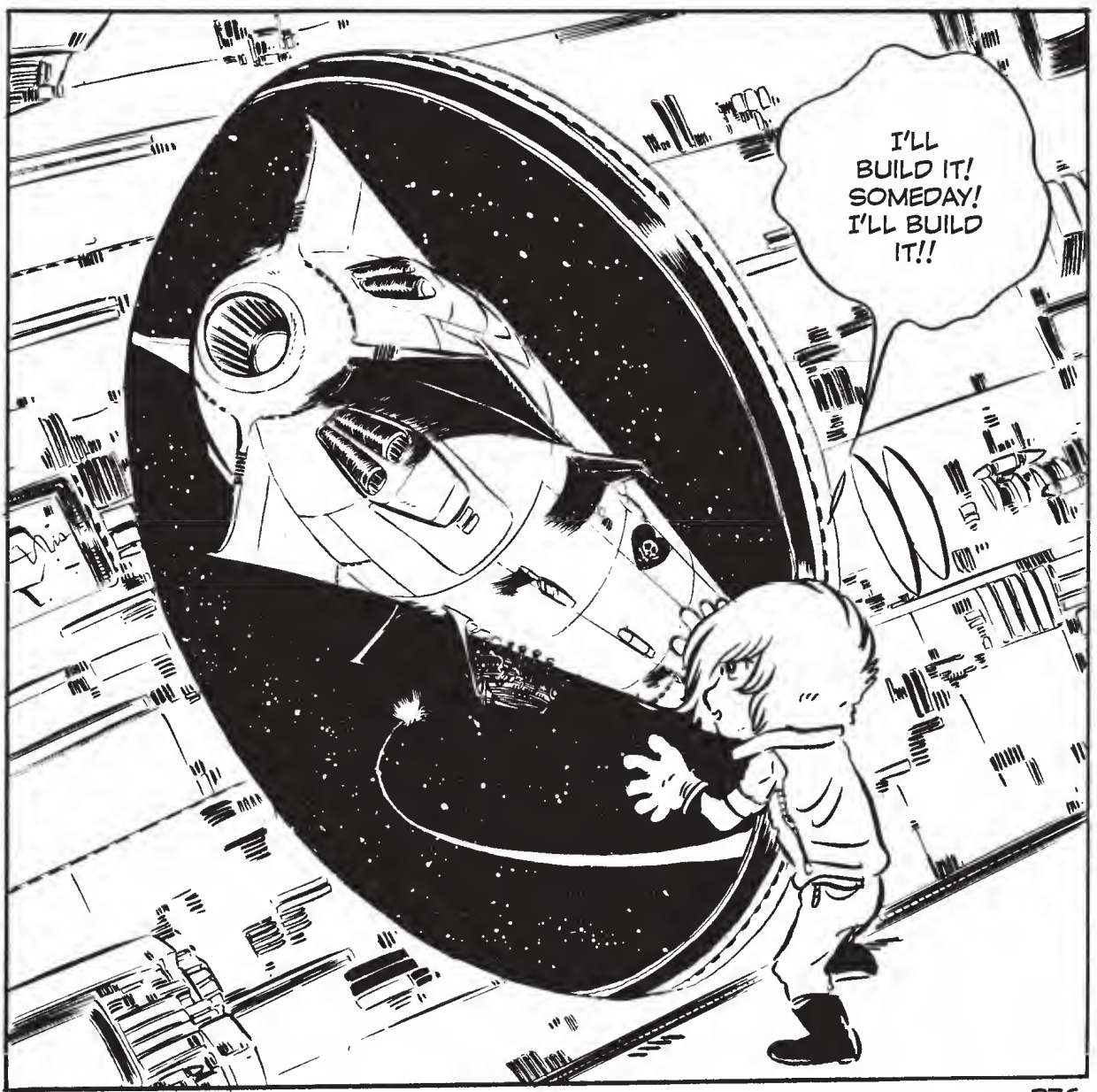

YOU DRAW YOUR GRAVITYSABER? WHY DO YOU OPPOSE US, EMERALDAS?
SILENCE... I CANNOT FORGIVE THOSE WHO TAKE PLEASURE FROM ANOTHER'S MOST INTIMATE PAIN.

WARIK

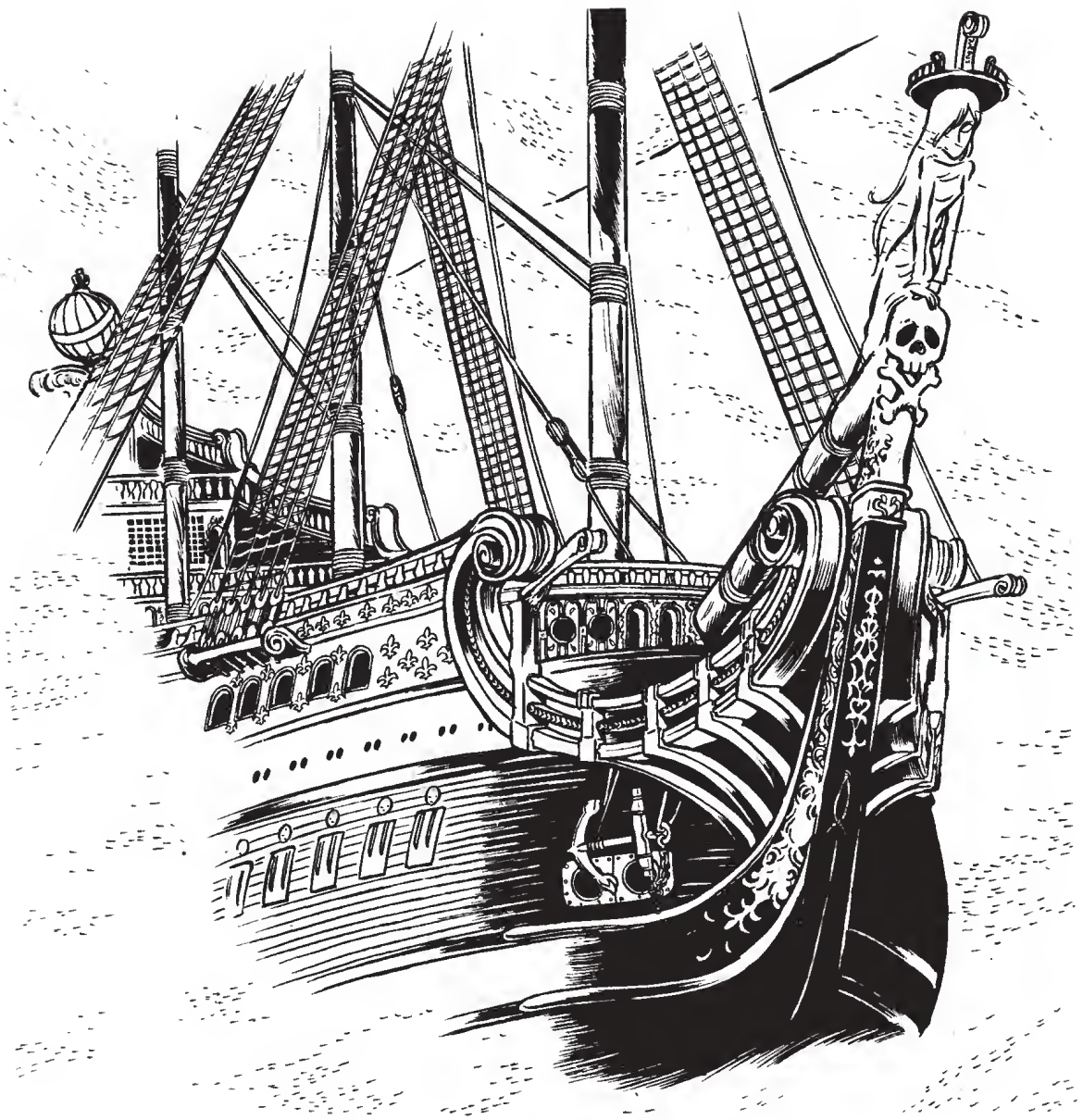

??
NO.
NO.
NO.
!!
AWAKEN. YOU ARE NO LONGER CONFINED BY THE STONE DOOR.
HOW?
I HAD TO HURT AN OLD ACQUAINTANCE OF MINE...
ON YOUR SHIP.
WHERE AM I?
NO MATTER HOW ENRAGED THEY ARE.
THE SONG OF THE SIRENS CANNOT CARRY THIS FAR...
NEVER MIND. WHAT'S DONE IS DONE.

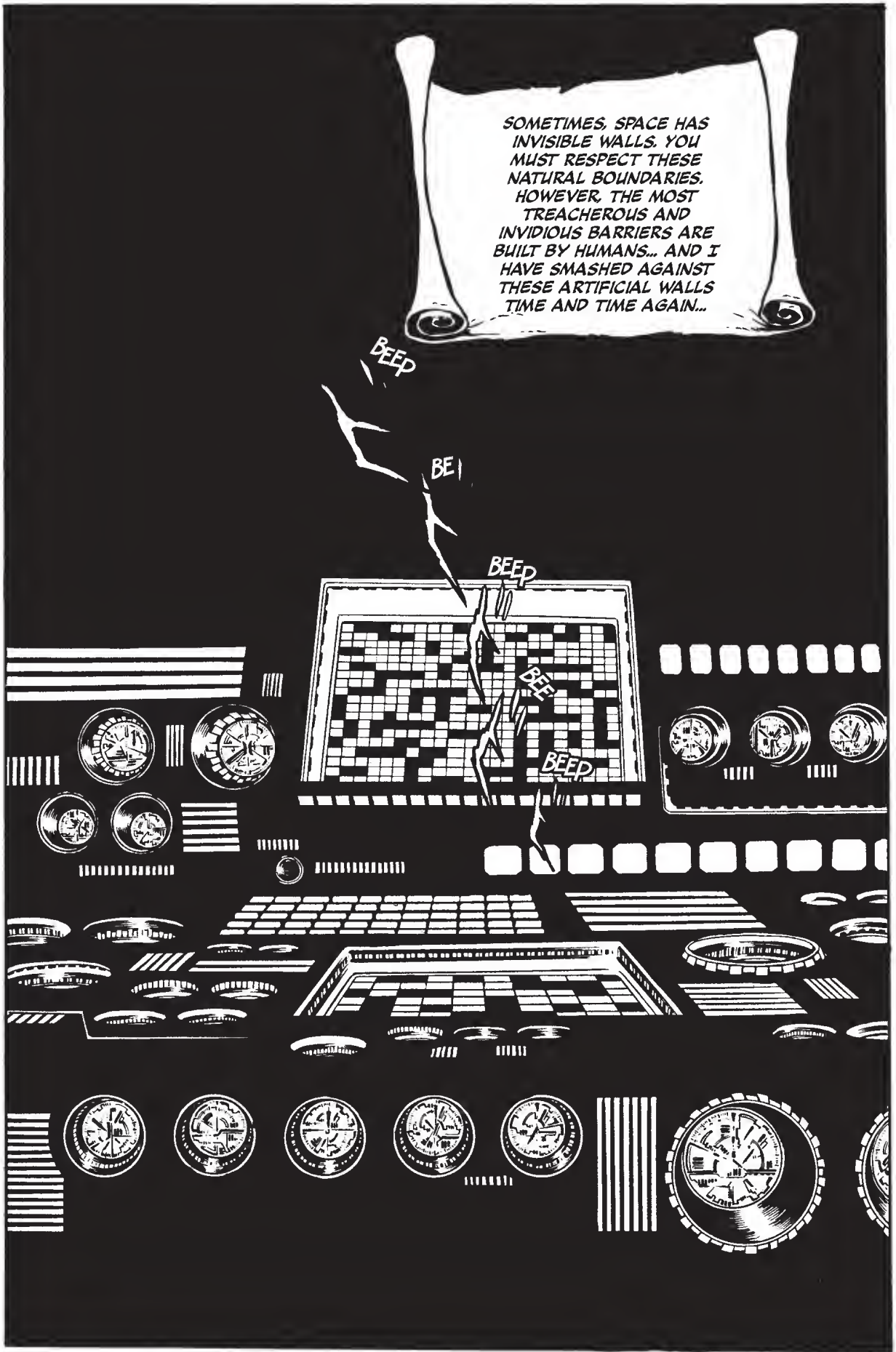

ANYONE WHO DIRECTLY HEARS THE SONG OF THE SIRENS IS MESMERIZED— DRAWN INTO ILLUSION, AND UNABLE TO RESIST.
SO I TOOK SOME PRE-CAUTIONS.
WHAT IS IT...?
RAMEL ASKED ME TO GIVE YOU THIS...
HE WANTED YOU TO USE THEM TO BUILD A GOOD SHIP.
BLUE-PRINTS FOR A SPACE-SHIP.
FAREWELL.
HE...

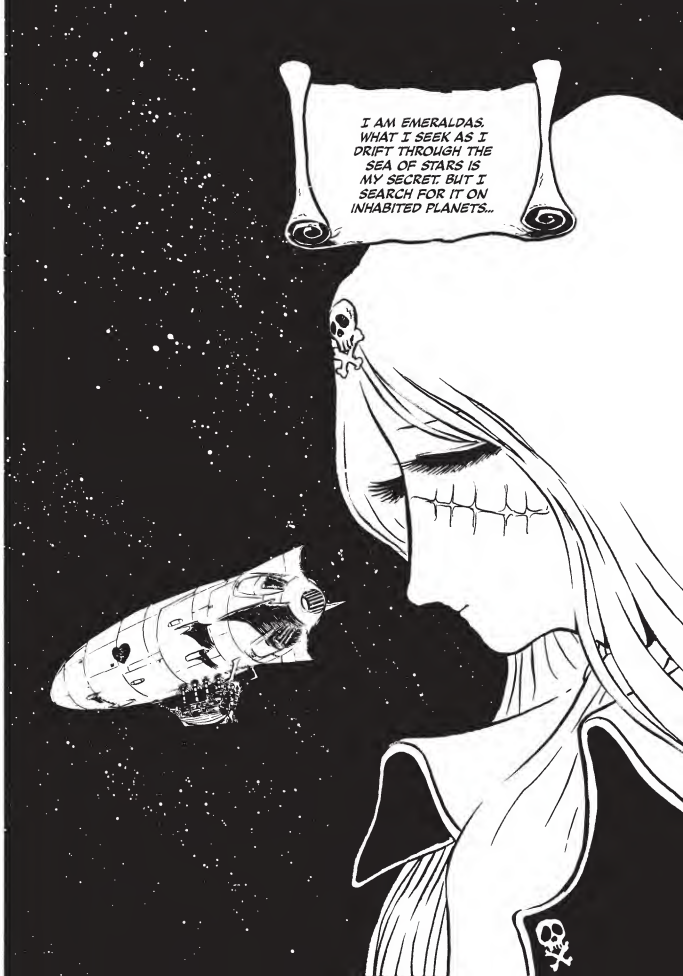

SHEEEW
THE QUEEN EMERALDAS!


I'LL BUILD IT! SOMEDAY! I'LL BUILD IT!!

WHIRRRRRR
THE WORD IMPOSSIBLE HAS NO MEANING IN THE HEARTS OF THE YOUNG THAT BURN WITH DREAMS... I VOYAGE THROUGH SPACE BECAUSE I KNOW THIS WELL. I AM EMERALDAS...



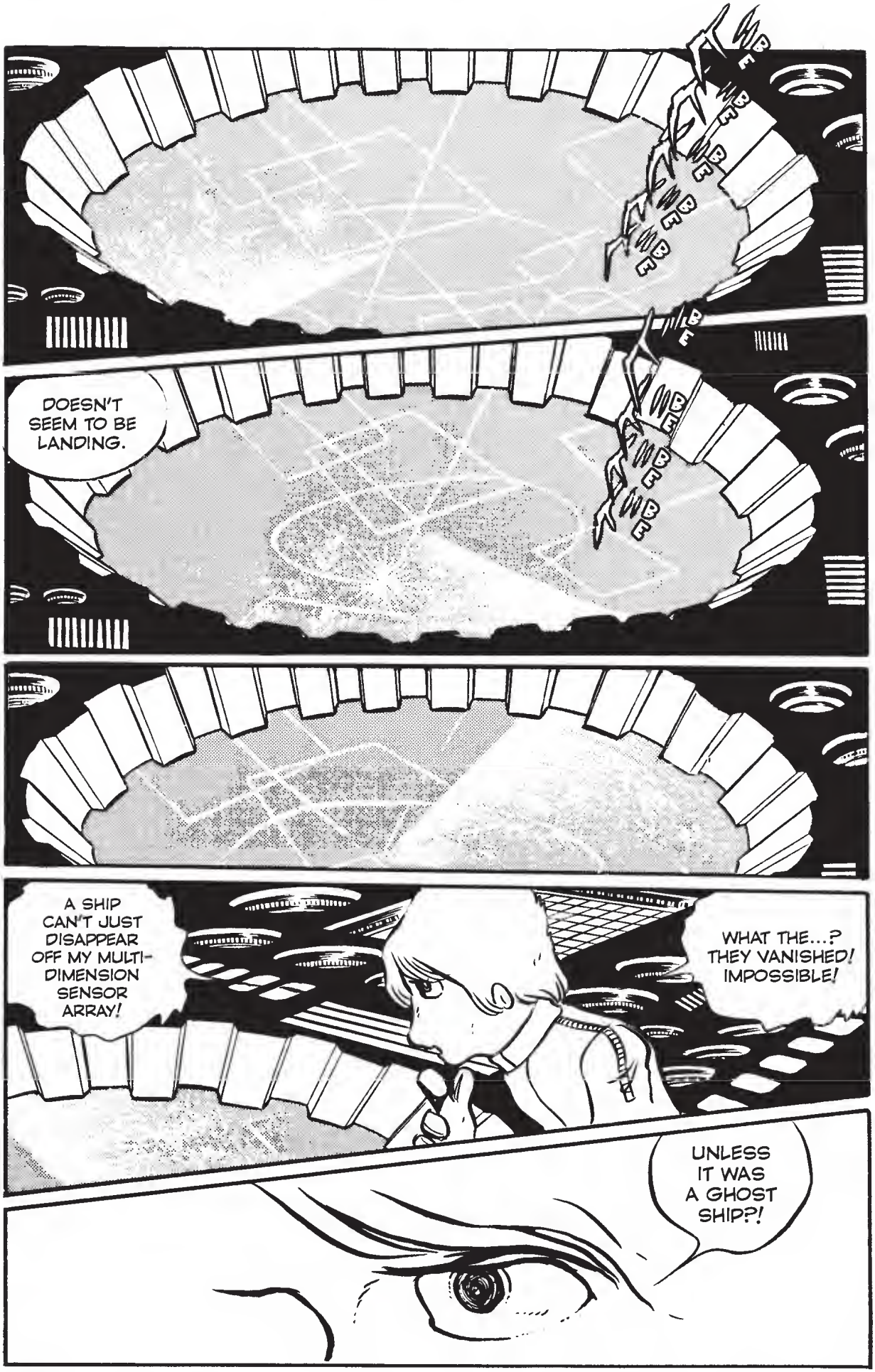

SOMETIMES, SPACE HAS INVISIBLE WALLS. YOU MUST RESPECT THESE NATURAL BOUNDARIES. HOWEVER, THE MOST TREACHEROUS AND INVIDIOUS BARRIERS ARE BUILT BY HUMANS... AND I HAVE SMASHED AGAINST THESE ARTIFICIAL WALLS TIME AND TIME AGAIN...
BEEP
BE
BEEP
BEEP
BEEP

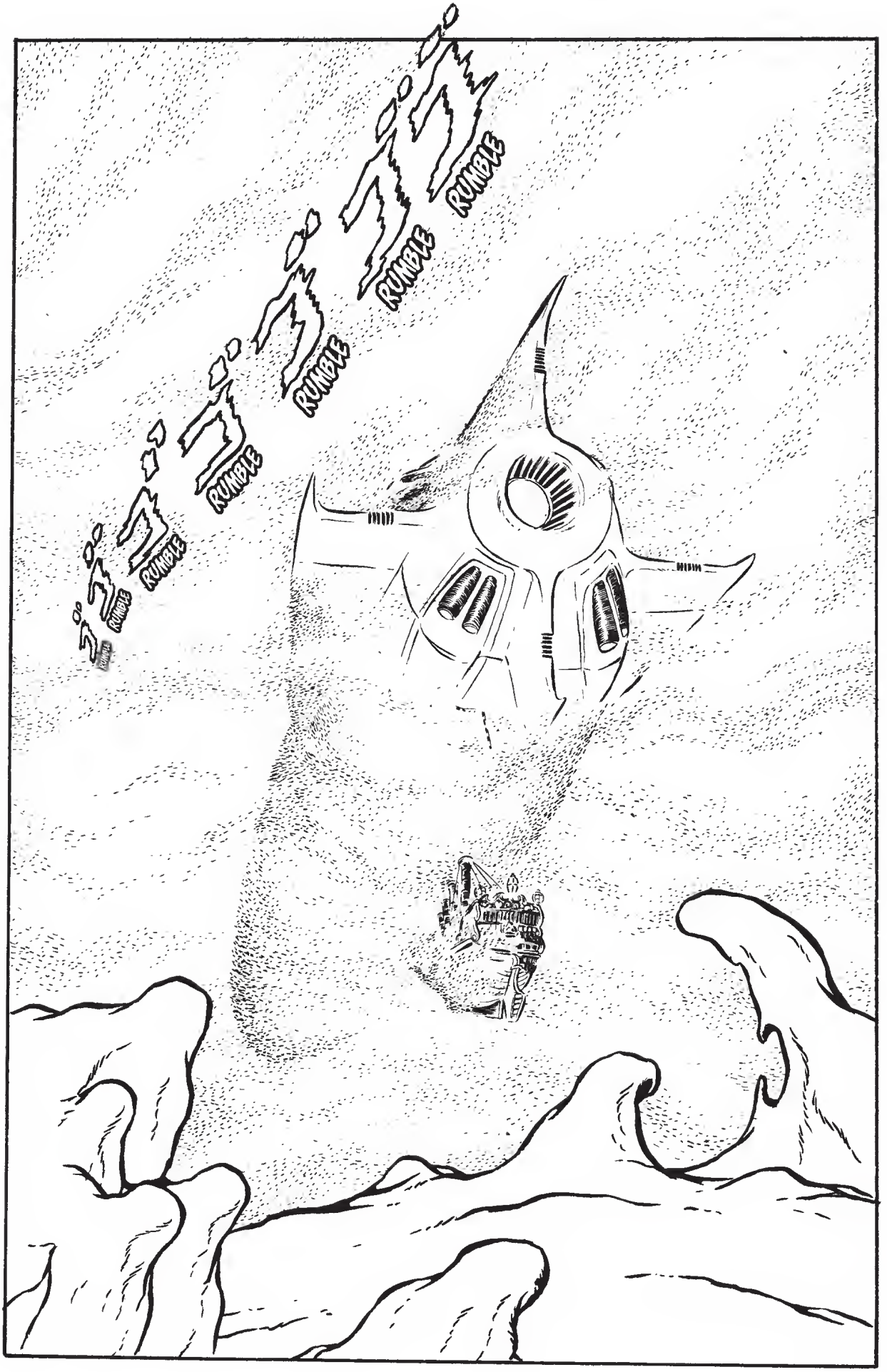

I AM EMERALDAS. WHAT I SEEK AS I DRIFT THROUGH THE SEA OF STARS IS MY SECRET. BUT I SEARCH FOR IT ON INHABITED PLANETS...

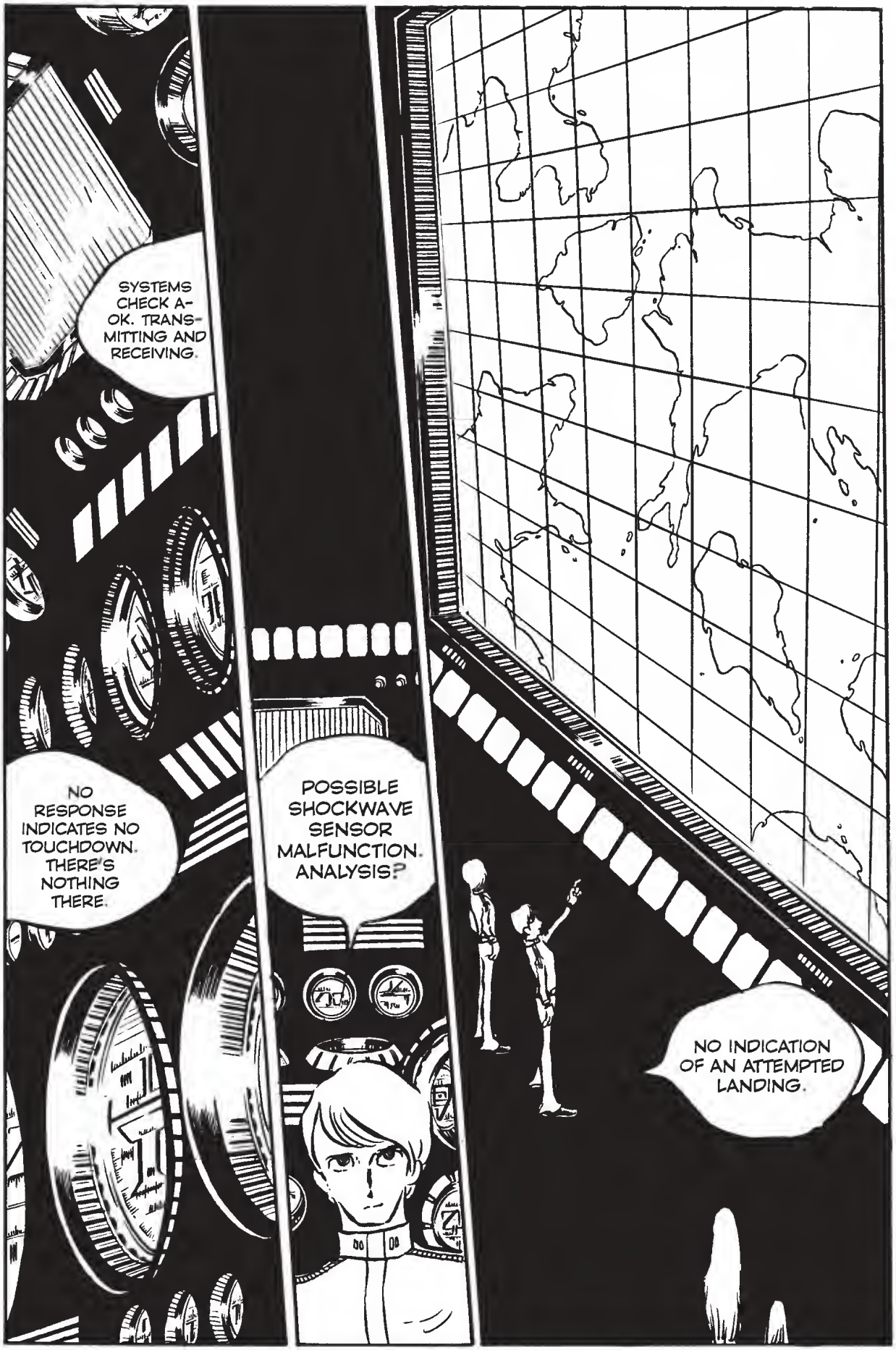
AUTHORIZE TO SANCTION? IT'LL BE IN RANGE OF THE SHOCK BATTERY SOON.
A STRANGE SHIP JUST ENTERED THE REGULATED ZONE. APPROACHING ON A STEADY COURSE.

BEEP
BEE
BEEP
HOLD ACTION. WHOEVER IT IS, THEY'VE GOT GUTS.
NO SHIP HAS EVER LEFT MY REGULATED ZONE ALIVE.
BEE
BEEP
HEE HEE HEE!
HEE HEE HEE...
AFFIRMATIVE. HEE HEE HE...

WHRRRRRRR

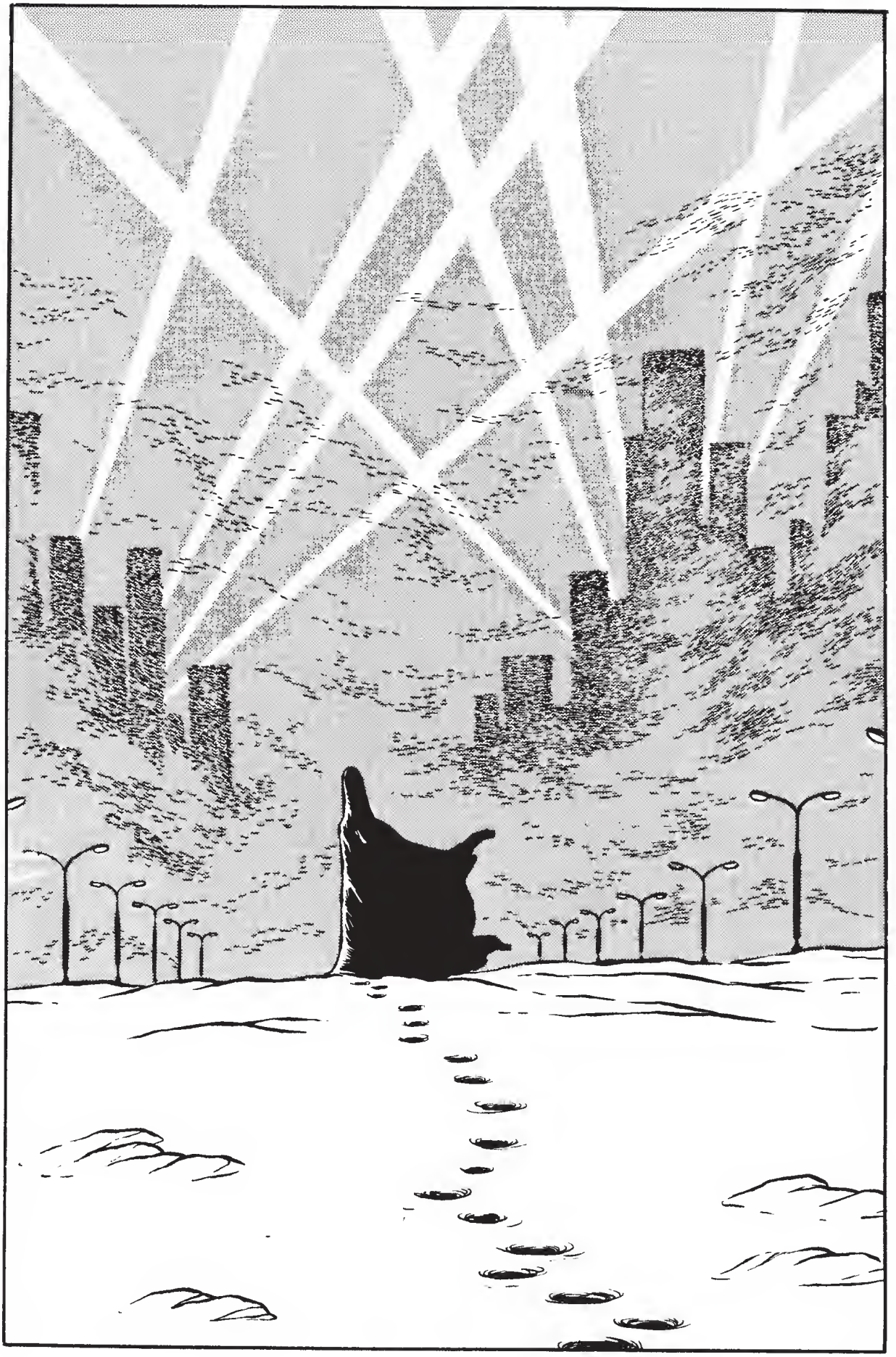

BEEE

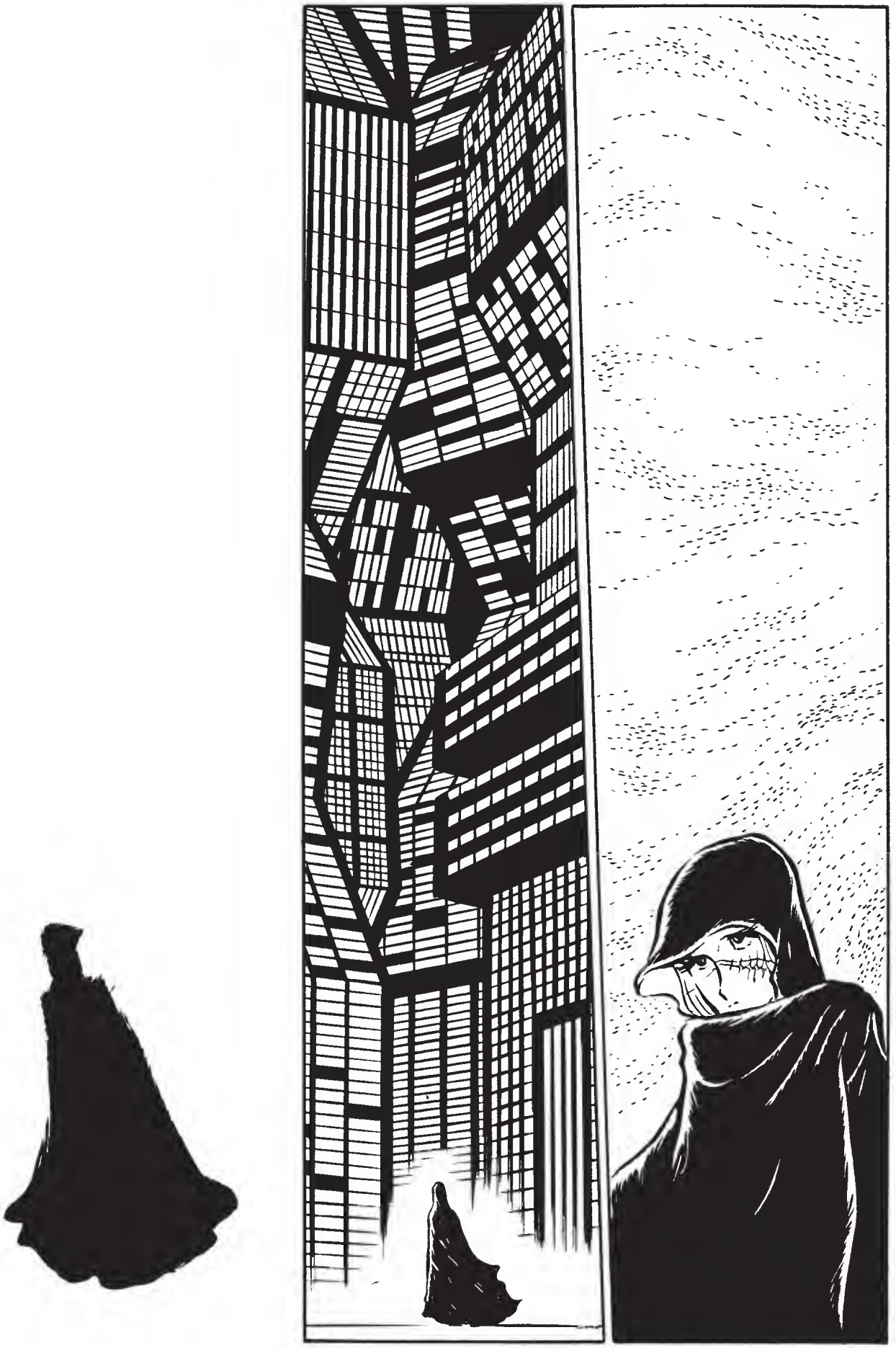

RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE


SYSTEMS CHECK A-OK. TRANSMITTING AND RECEIVING.
NO RESPONSE INDICATES NO TOUCHDOWN. THERE'S NOTHING THERE.
POSSIBLE SHOCKWAVE SENSOR MALFUNCTION. ANALYSIS?
NO INDICATION OF AN ATTEMPTED LANDING.

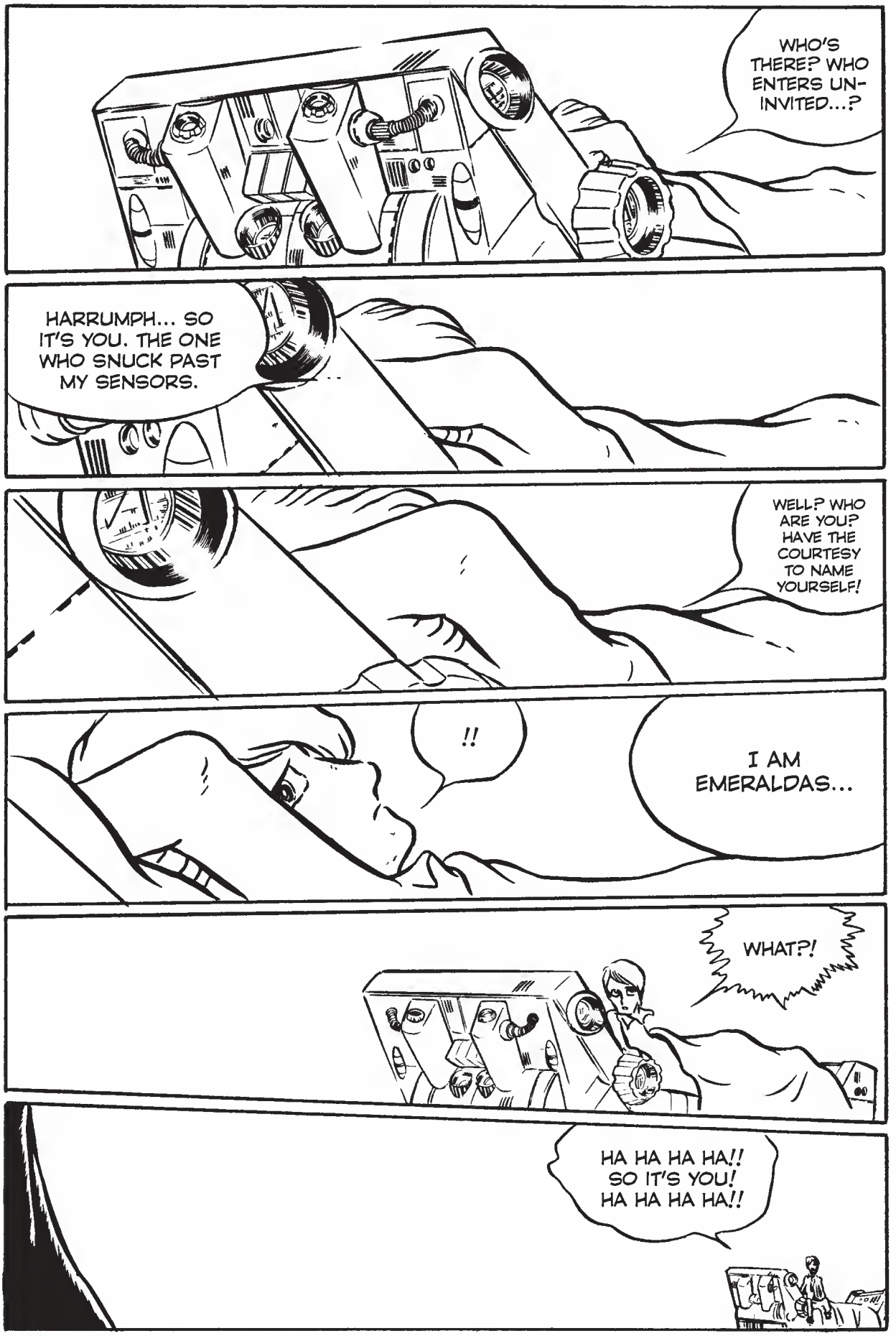
PERHAPS A MIRAGE... I DON'T FEEL SO WELL. I'M GOING TO REST.
GOOD NIGHT, COMMANDANT...
THE CITY LIGHTS SPARKLE. MY PLANET IS AT PEACE.
...

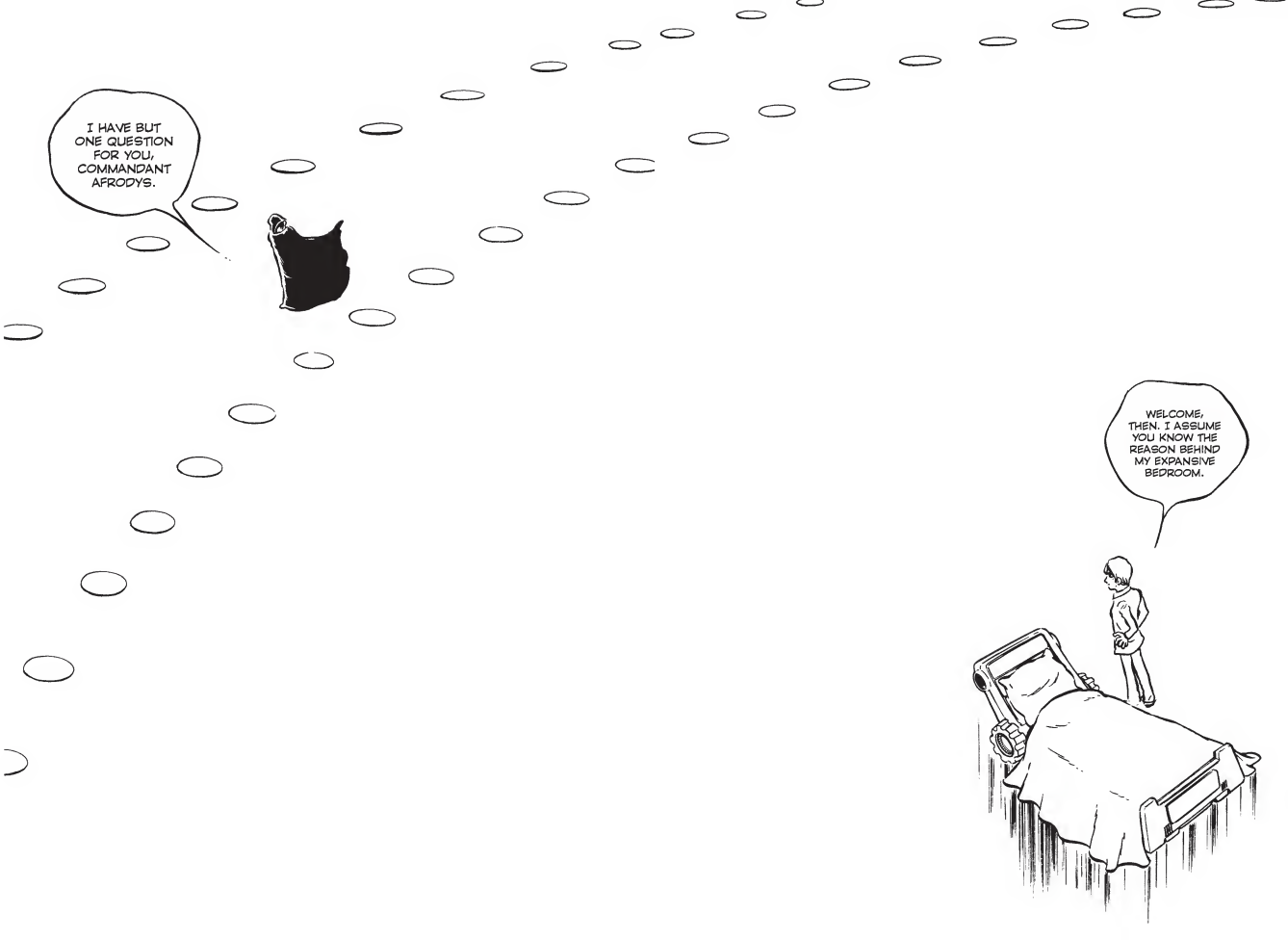
I WILL NOT PERMIT AN INVADER TO DISRUPT THE PEACE OF MY PLANET.
YAWN... I NEED A FEW HOURS' SLEEP.

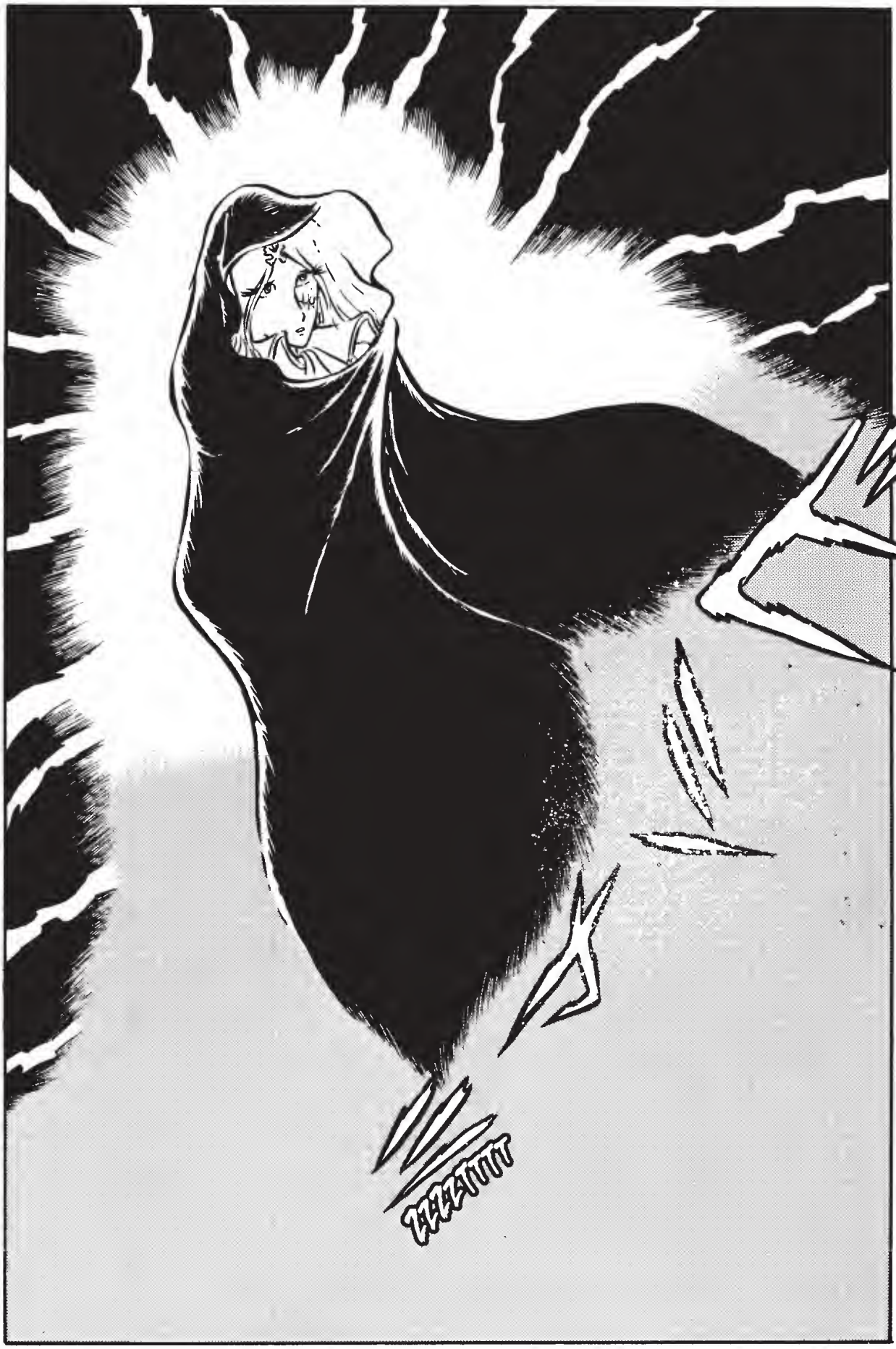




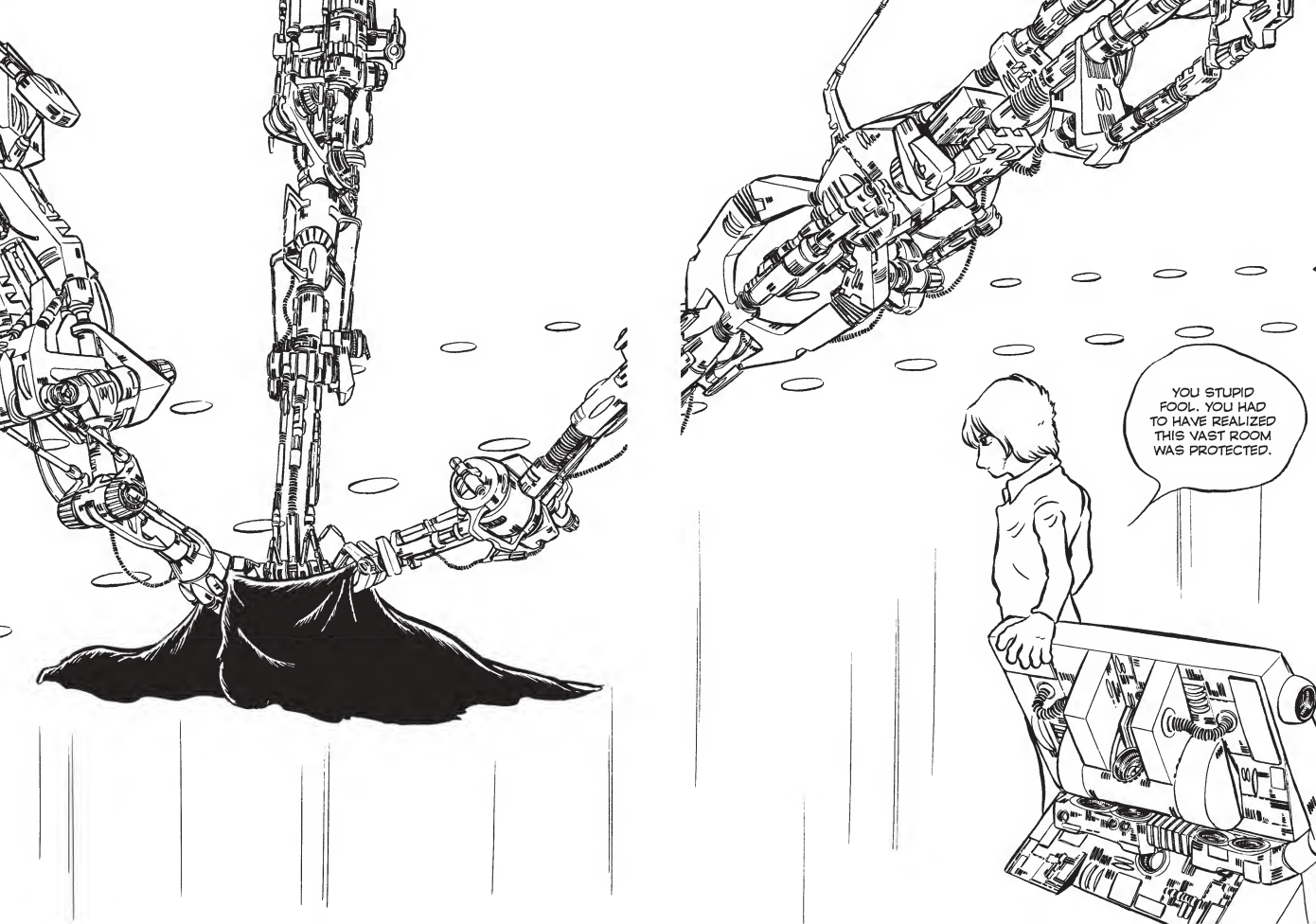
BEEP
BEEP
BEEP
BEEP
BEEP

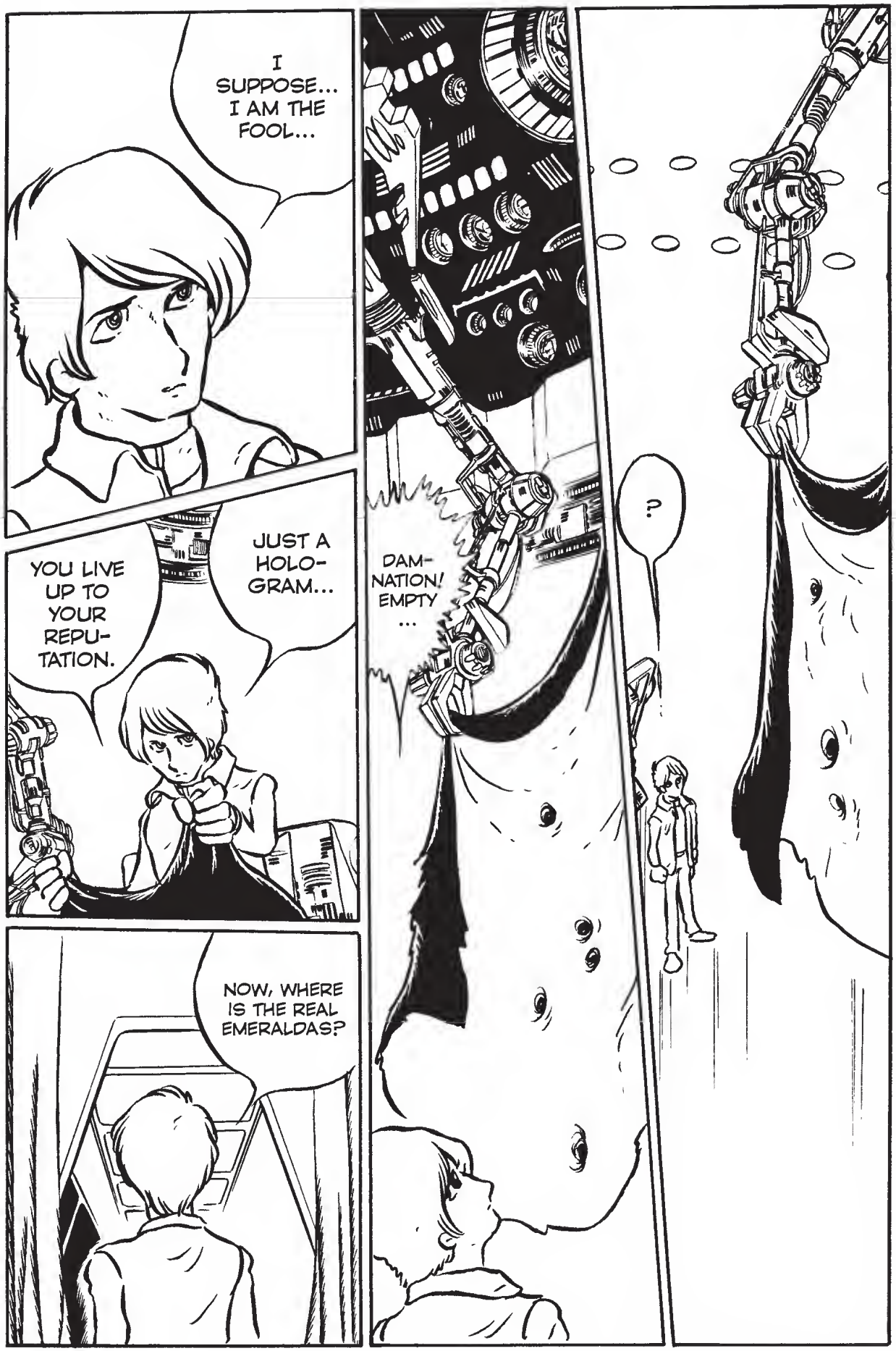

WHO'S THERE? WHO ENTERS UNINVITED...?
HARRUMPH... SO IT'S YOU. THE ONE WHO SNUCK PAST MY SENSORS.
WELL? WHO ARE YOU? HAVE THE COURTESY TO NAME YOURSELF!
!!
I AM EMERALDAS...
WHAT?!
HA HA HA HA!! SO IT'S YOU! HA HA HA HA!!

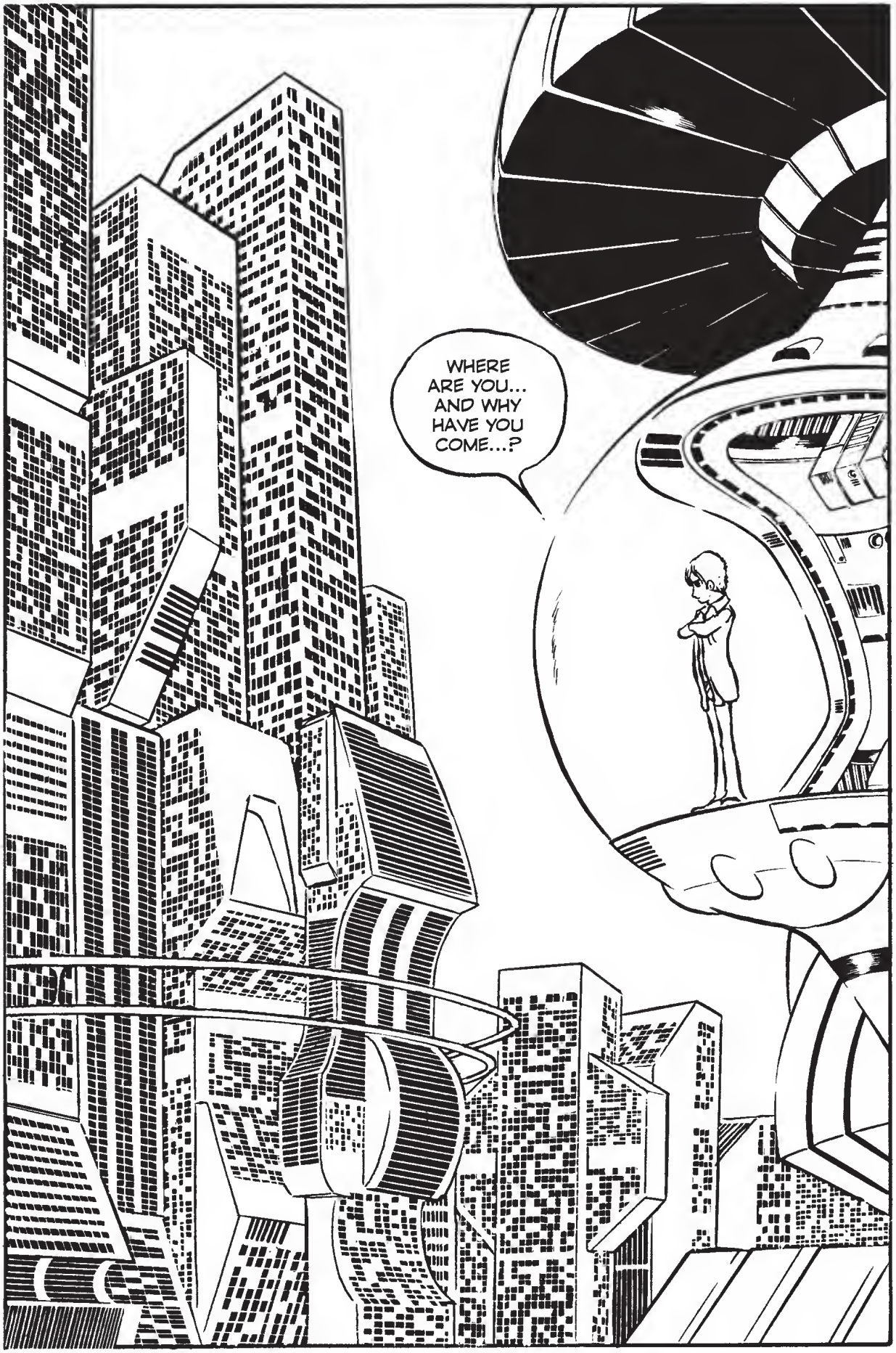

I HAVE BUT ONE QUESTION FOR YOU, COMMANDANT AFRODYS.
WELCOME, THEN. I ASSUME YOU KNOW THE REASON BEHIND MY EXPANSIVE BEDROOM.


ZEEEEEE

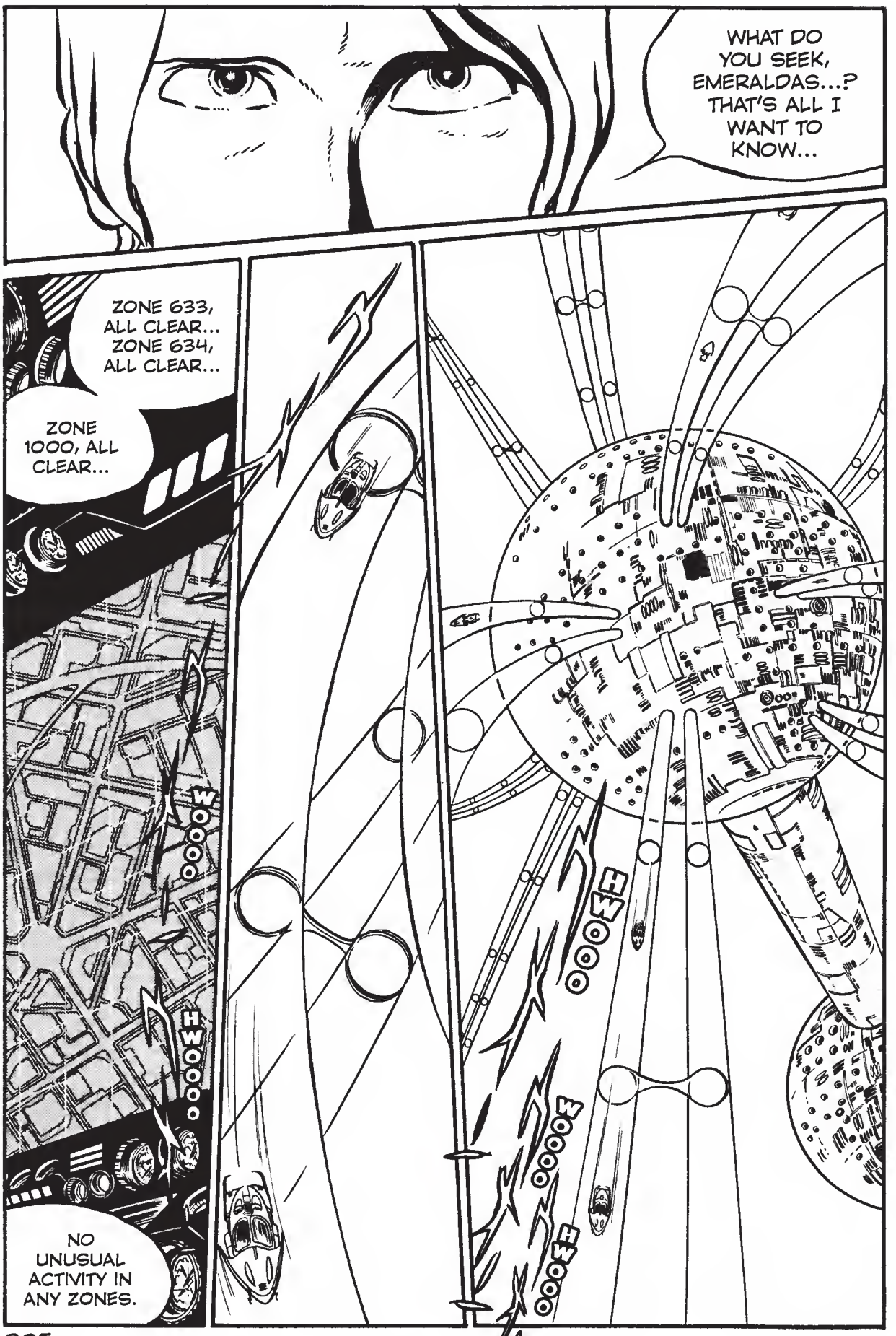
WHAT A SHAME, EMERALDAS. YOU, I WOULD HAVE GRANTED CITIZENSHIP.


YOU STUPID FOOL. YOU HAD TO HAVE REALIZED THIS VAST ROOM WAS PROTECTED.

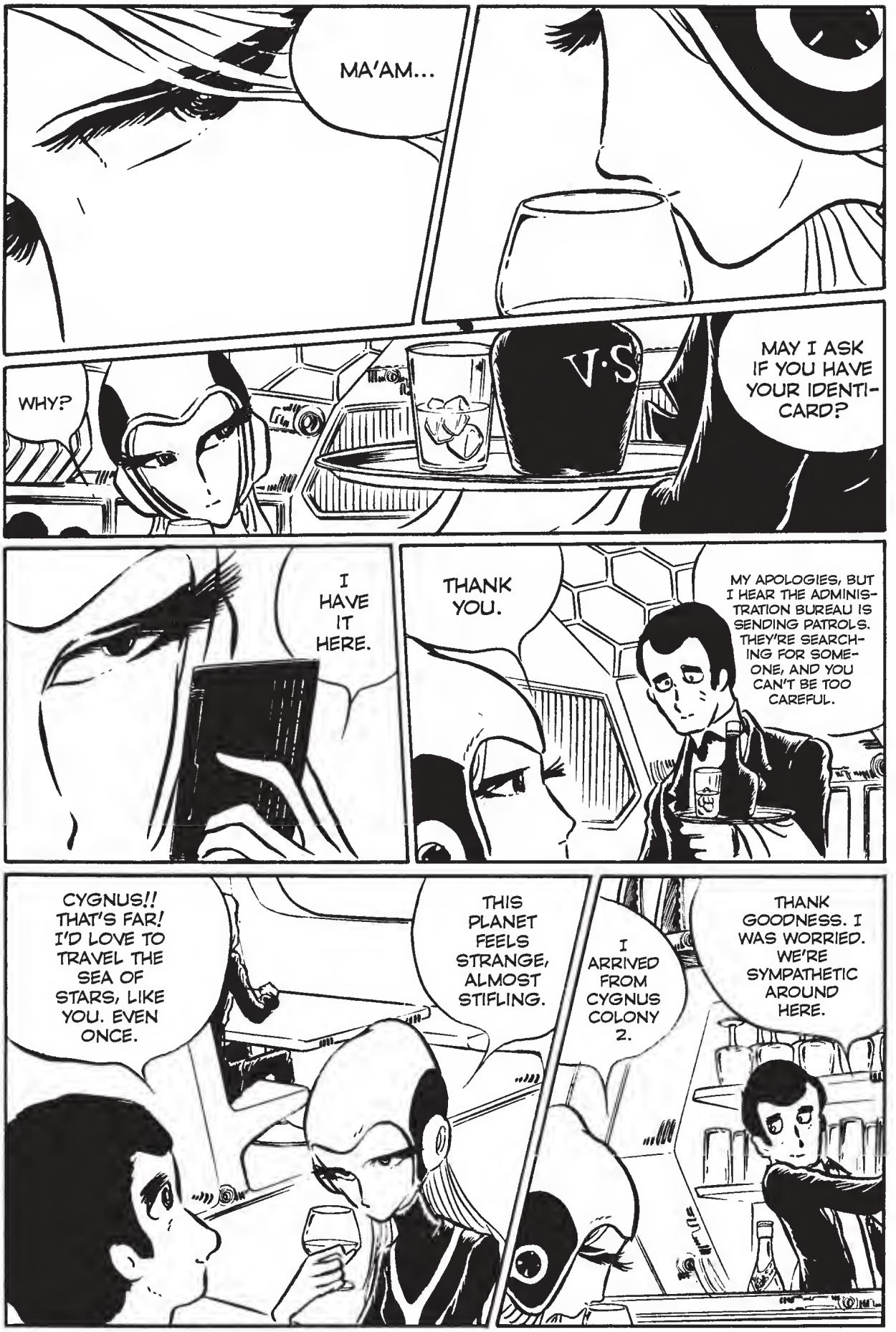

I SUPPOSE... I AM THE FOOL...
JUST A HOLO-GRAM...
YOU LIVE UP TO YOUR REPU-TATION.
NOW, WHERE IS THE REAL EMERALDAS?
DAM-NATION! EMPTY ...
?

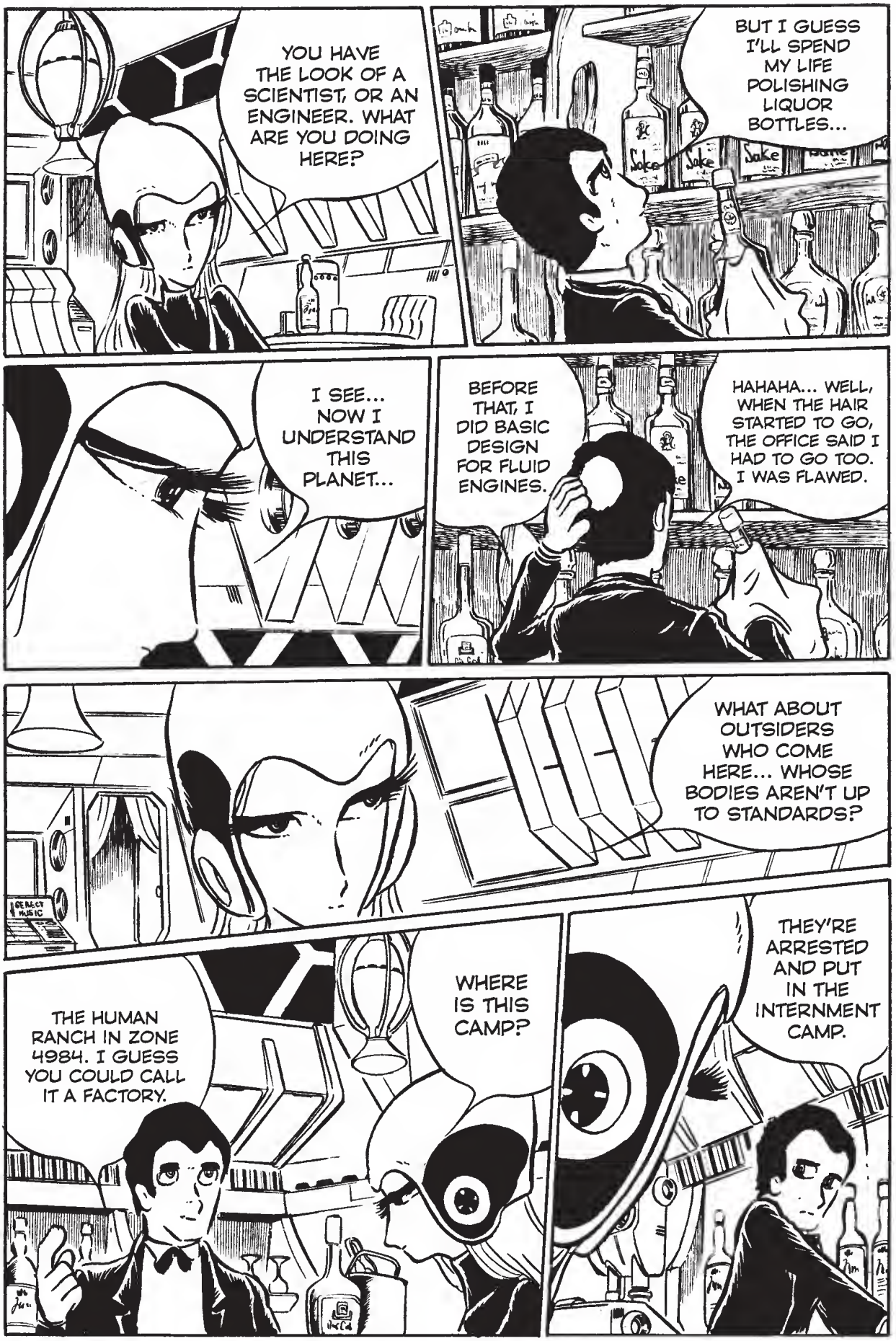

WHERE ARE YOU... AND WHY HAVE YOU COME...?

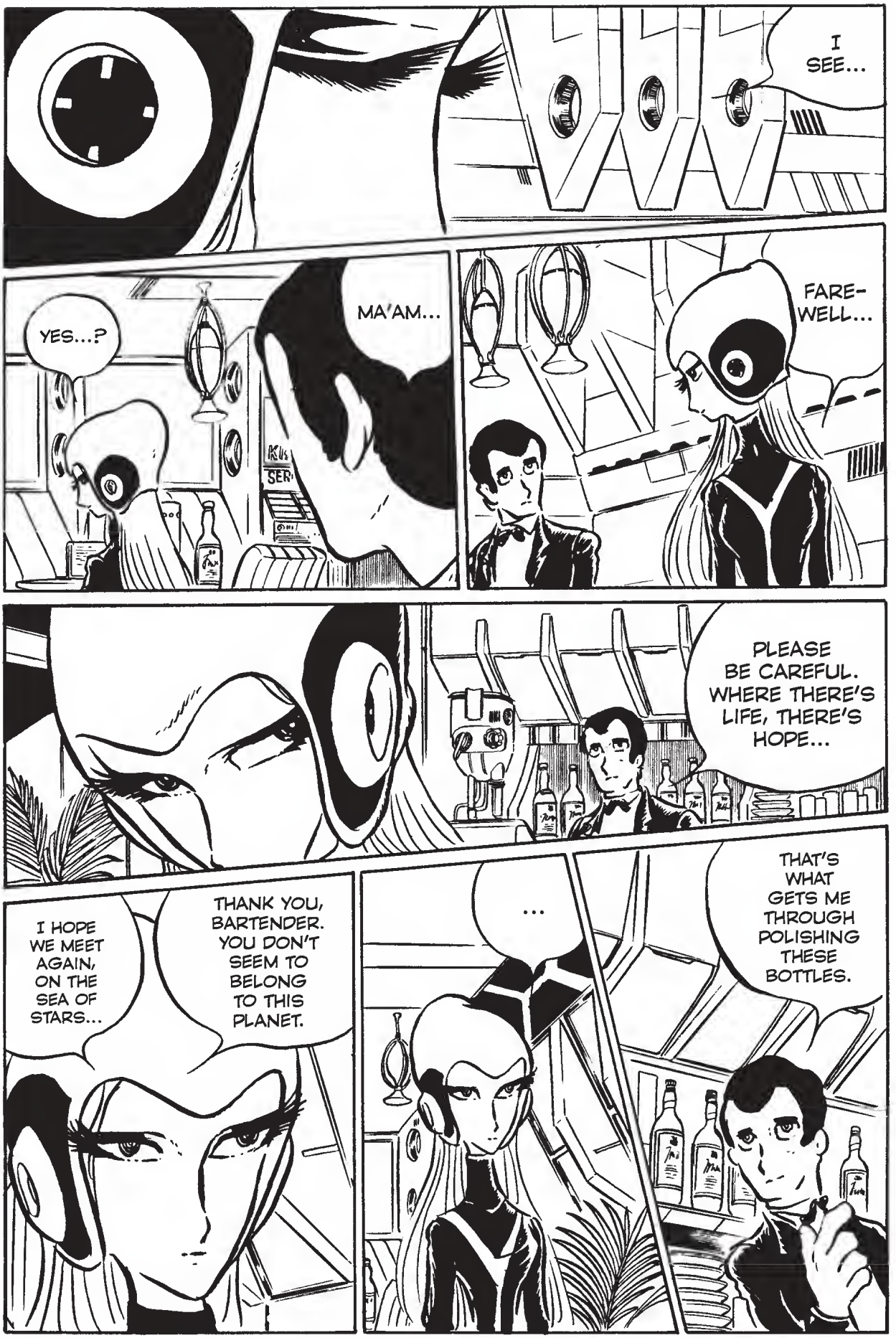
ADMINIS-
TRATION
BUREAU,
ANNEX 1
HERE.
BEEEEEEE
WHAT? AM I
SPEAKING TO
COMMANDANT
AFRODYS?
WE HAVE AN
INTRUDER!
MOBILIZE ALL
ADMINISTRATION
BUREAU
SURVEILLANCE
UNITS!
SEND PATROLS
OUTSIDE THE
CITY BORDERS!
YOU'RE LOOKING
FOR A LARGE SHIP.
FIND HER!!
DON'T KILL
HER. I NEED TO
KNOW WHAT
SHE WANTS.
BETA? NO!
DEFINITELY
AN ALPHA!
BEAUTIFUL,
WITH A SCAR
ON HER FACE.


WHAT DO YOU SEEK, EMERALDAS...? THAT'S ALL I WANT TO KNOW...
ZONE 633, ALL CLEAR... ZONE 634, ALL CLEAR...
ZONE 1000, ALL CLEAR...
WOOOO
HWOOOO
HOOOO
HOOOO
HOOOO
NO UNUSUAL ACTIVITY IN ANY ZONES.

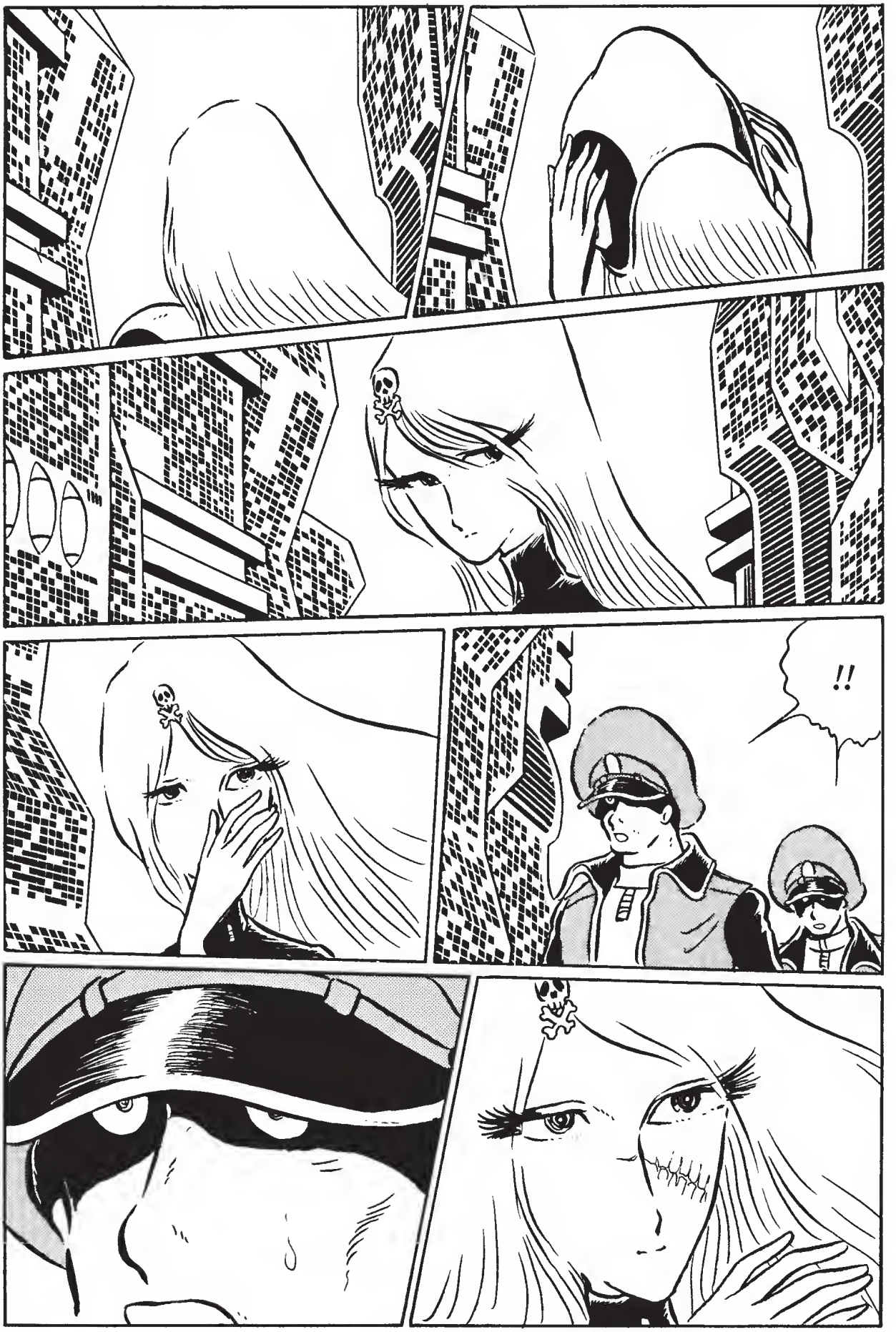
NOOOOOZ
Café
Antarçs
Café
Antar


MA'AM...
V·S
MAY I ASK IF YOU HAVE YOUR IDENTI-CARD?
WHY?
I HAVE IT HERE.
THANK YOU.
MY APOLOGIES, BUT I HEAR THE ADMINIS-TRATION BUREAU IS SENDING PATROLS. THEY'RE SEARCH-ING FOR SOME-ONE, AND YOU CAN'T BE TOO CAREFUL.
CYGNUS!! THAT'S FAR! I'D LOVE TO TRAVEL THE SEA OF STARS, LIKE YOU. EVEN ONCE.
THIS PLANET FEELS STRANGE, ALMOST STIFLING.
I ARRIVED FROM CYGNUS COLONY 2.
THANK GOODNESS. I WAS WORRIED. WE'RE SYMPATHETIC AROUND HERE.

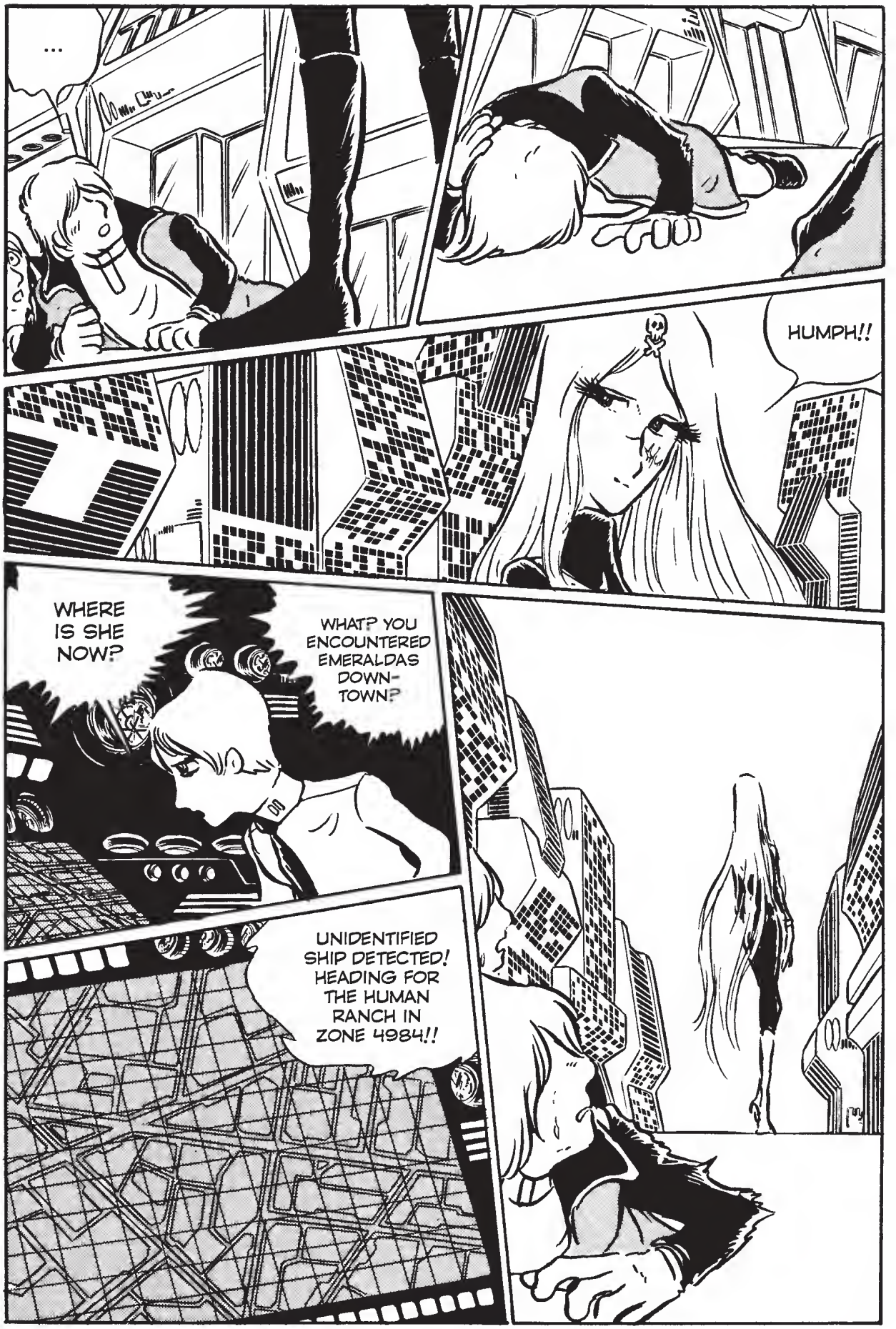

YOU HAVE THE LOOK OF A SCIENTIST, OR AN ENGINEER. WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
BUT I GUESS I'LL SPEND MY LIFE POLISHING LIQUOR BOTTLES...
Sake
Sake
Sake
I SEE... NOW I UNDERSTAND THIS PLANET...
BEFORE THAT, I DID BASIC DESIGN FOR FLUID ENGINES.
HAHAHA... WELL, WHEN THE HAIR STARTED TO GO, THE OFFICE SAID I HAD TO GO TOO. I WAS FLAWED.
WHAT ABOUT OUTSIDERS WHO COME HERE... WHOSE BODIES AREN'T UP TO STANDARDS?
THE HUMAN RANCH IN ZONE 4984. I GUESS YOU COULD CALL IT A FACTORY.
WHERE IS THIS CAMP?
THEY'RE ARRESTED AND PUT IN THE INTERNMENT CAMP.

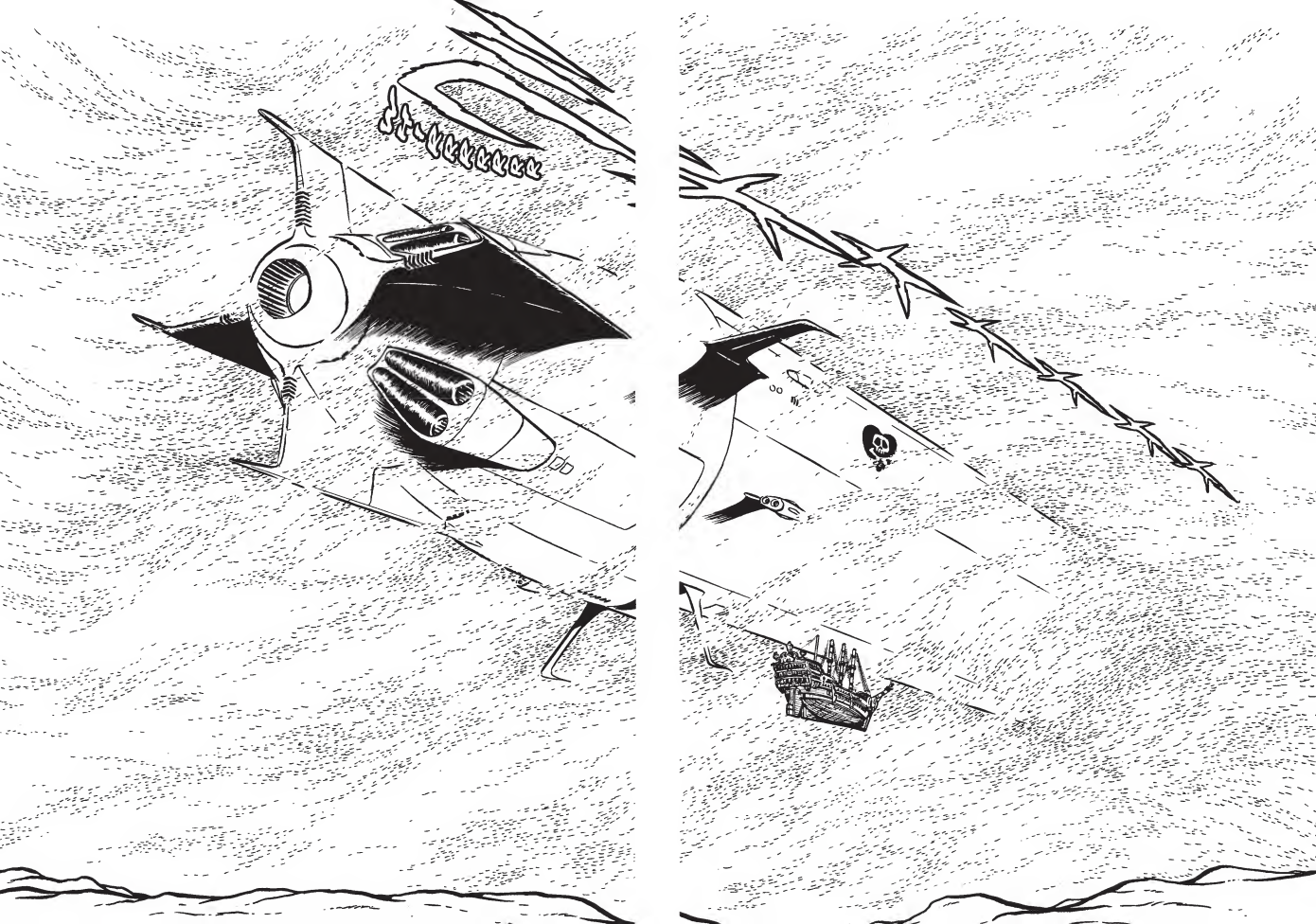

I SEE...
MA'AM...
YES...?
FARE-WELL...
PLEASE BE CAREFUL. WHERE THERE'S LIFE, THERE'S HOPE...
THANK YOU, BARTENDER. YOU DON'T SEEM TO BELONG TO THIS PLANET.
I HOPE WE MEET AGAIN, ON THE SEA OF STARS...
...
THAT'S WHAT GETS ME THROUGH POLISHING THESE BOTTLES.

STOP! YOU THERE!! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
LOOK!
OH YEAH.

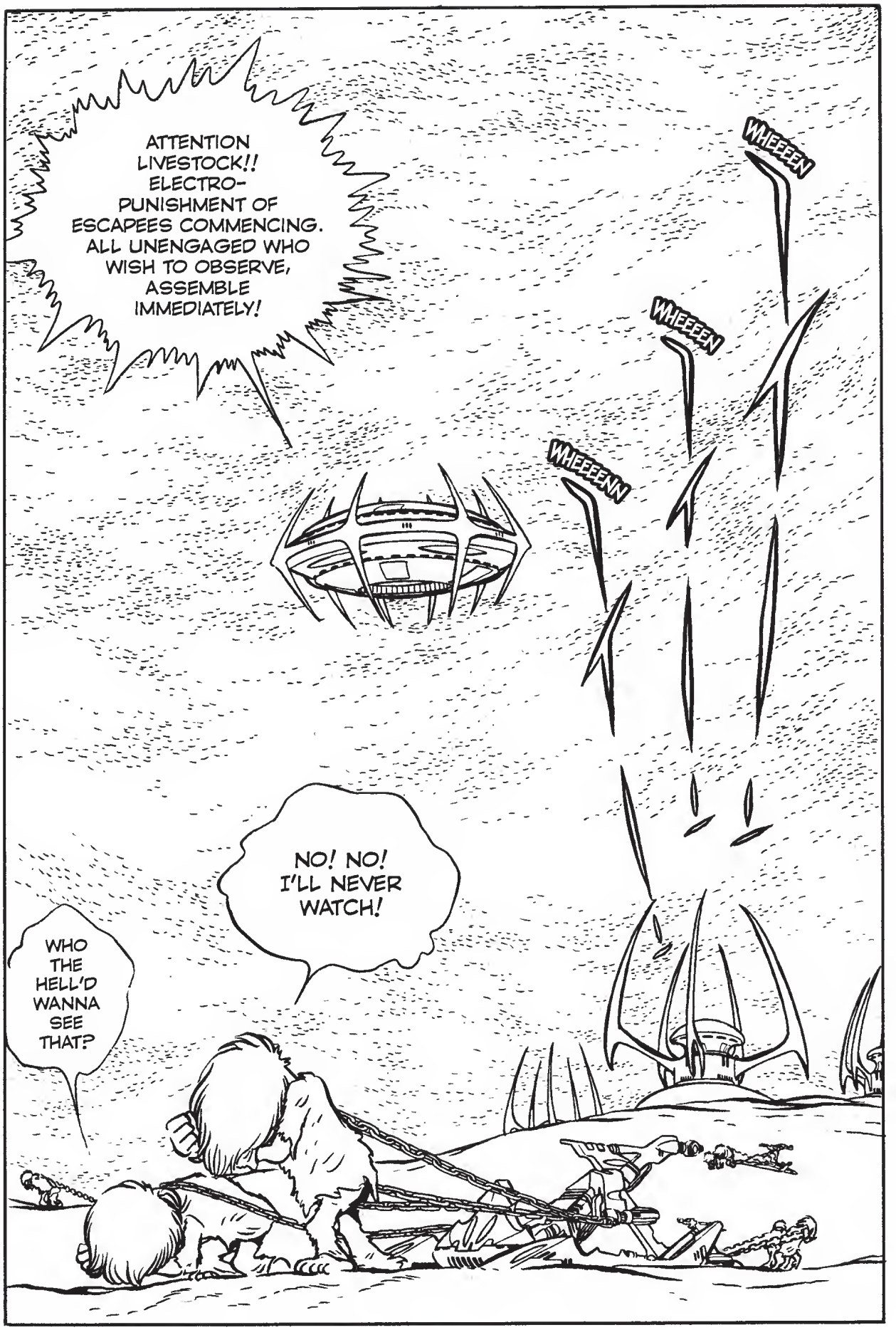


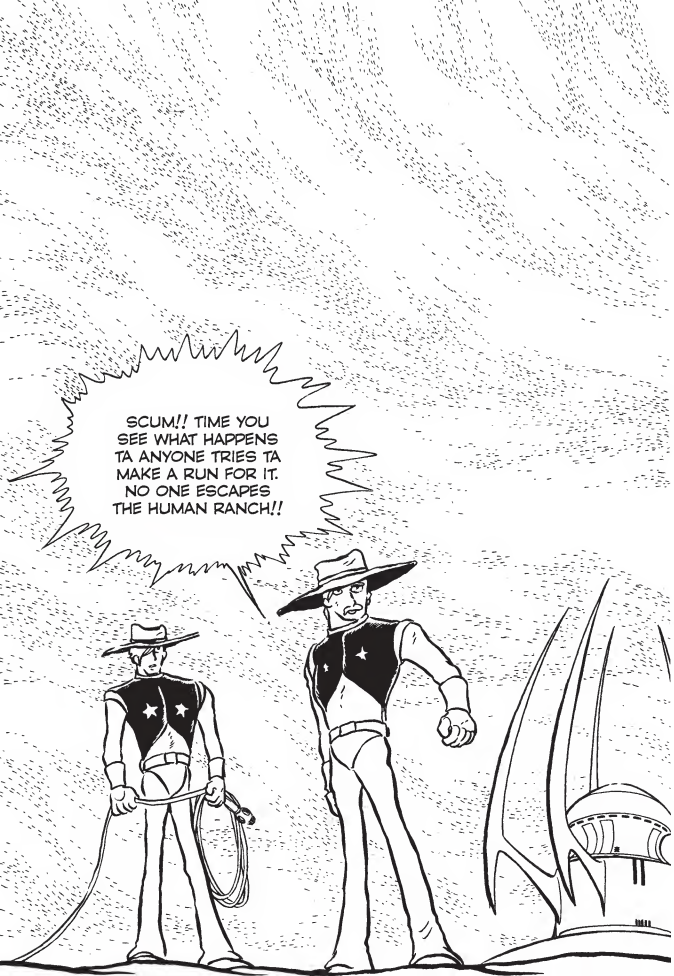
BANG
FWAASH


...
HUMPH!!
WHERE IS SHE NOW?
WHAT? YOU ENCOUNTERED EMERALDAS DOWN-TOWN?
UNIDENTIFIED SHIP DETECTED! HEADING FOR THE HUMAN RANCH IN ZONE 4984!!

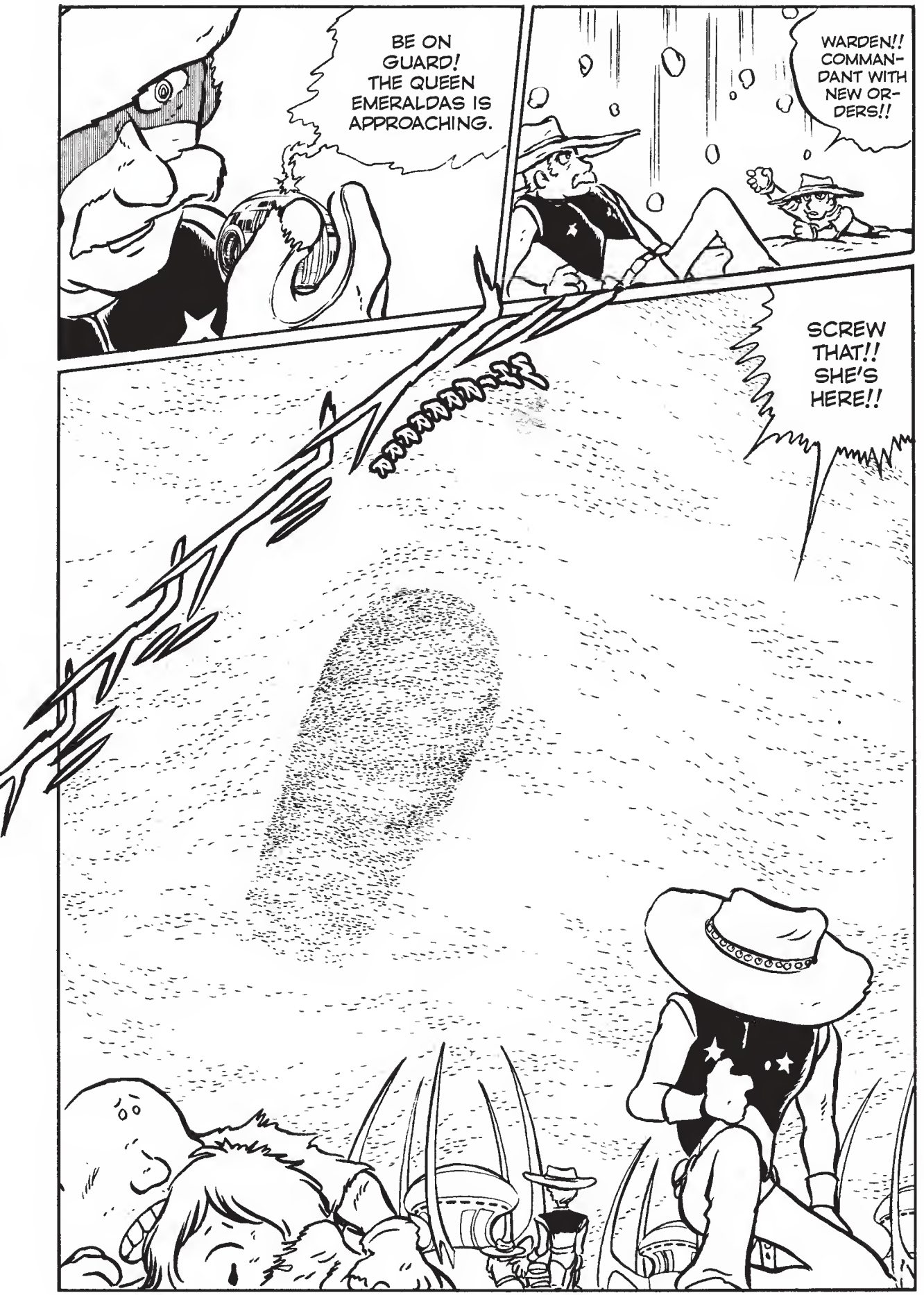


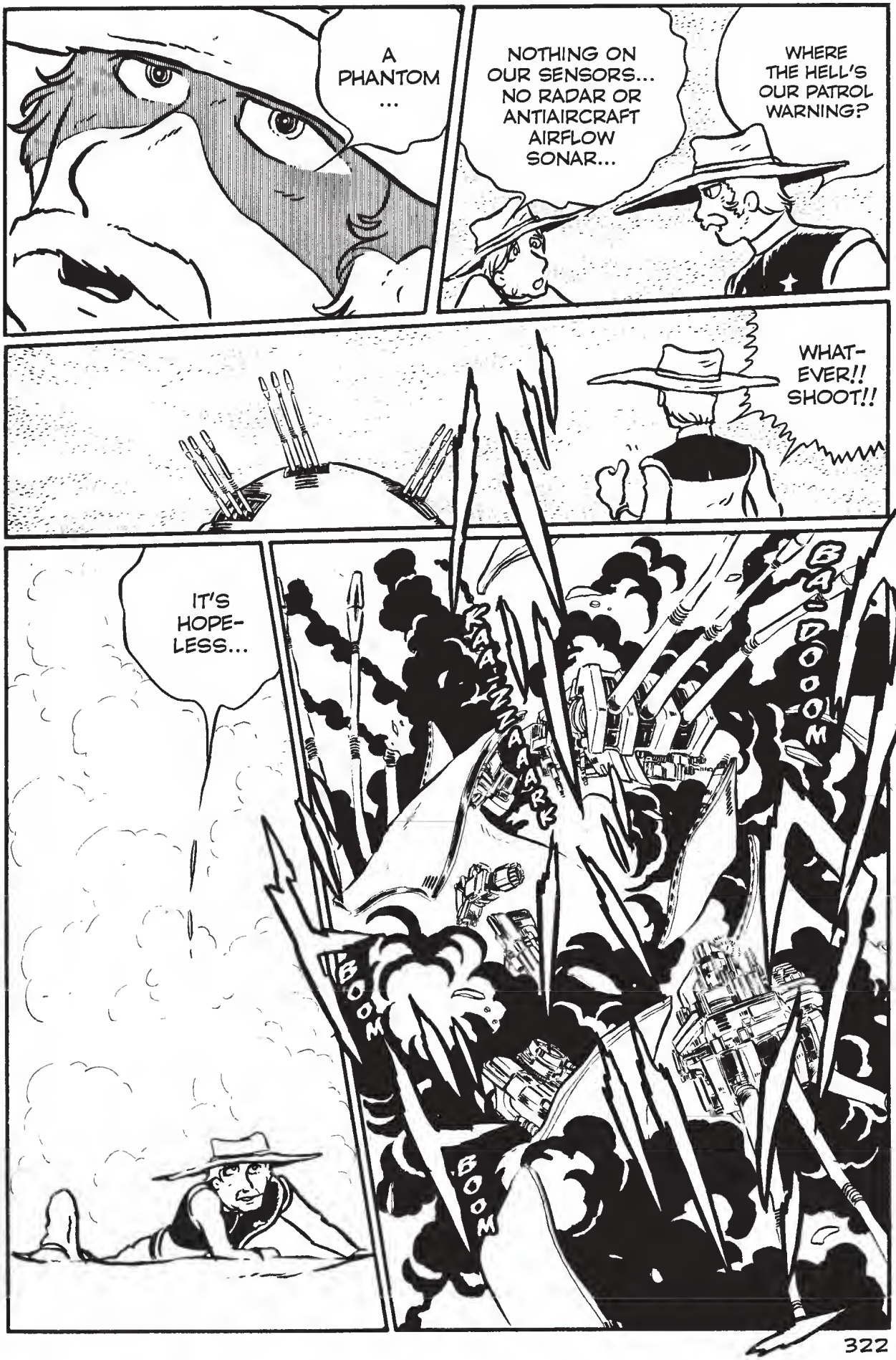
THE INTERNMENT CAMP! WHAT COULD SHE POSSIBLY WANT THERE?

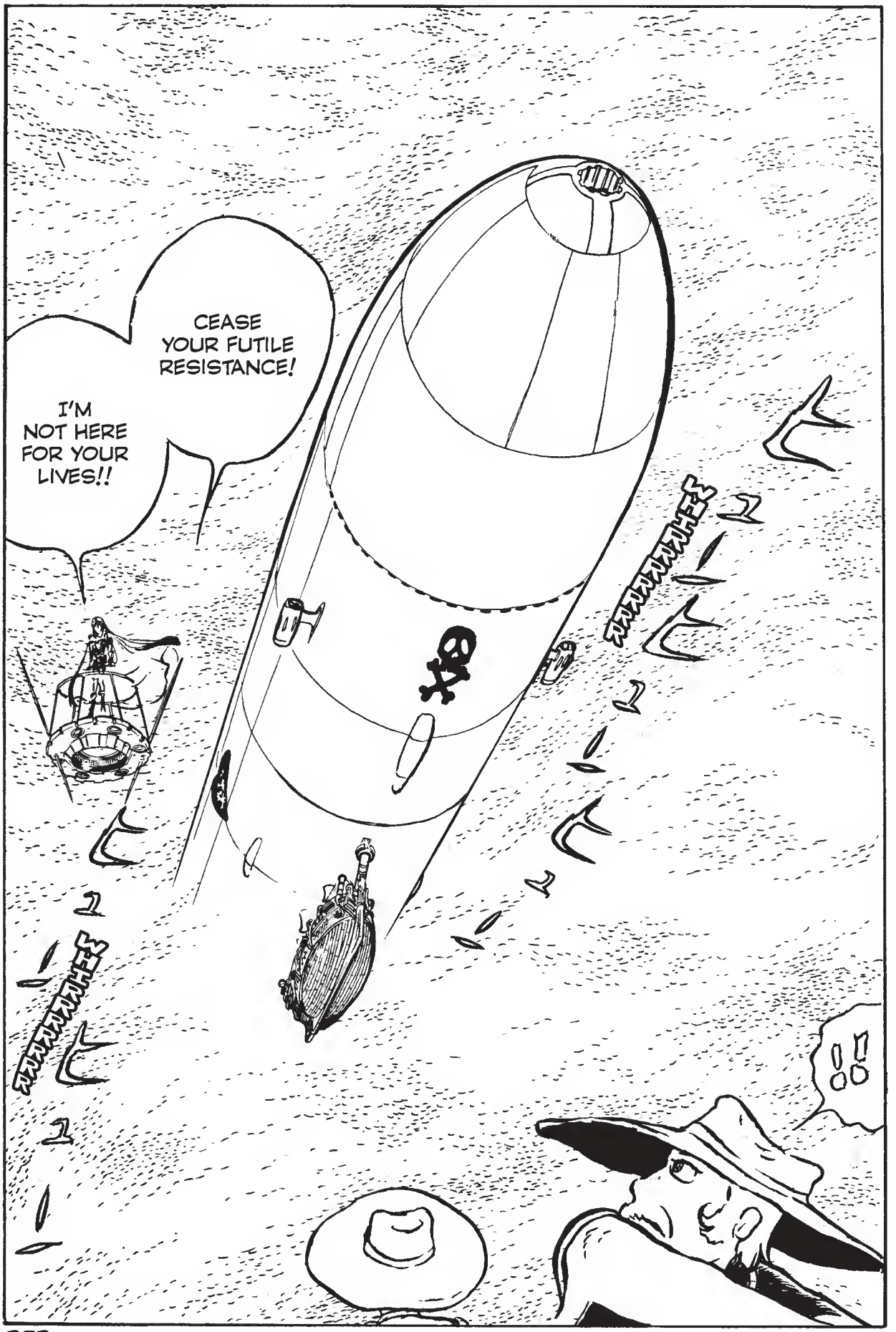

ATTENTION LIVESTOCK!! ELECTRO-PUNISHMENT OF ESCAPEES COMMENCING. ALL UNENGAGED WHO WISH TO OBSERVE, ASSEMBLE IMMEDIATELY!
WHEEEEN
WHEEEEN
WHEEEENN
NO! NO! I'LL NEVER WATCH!
WHO THE HELL'D WANNA SEE THAT?

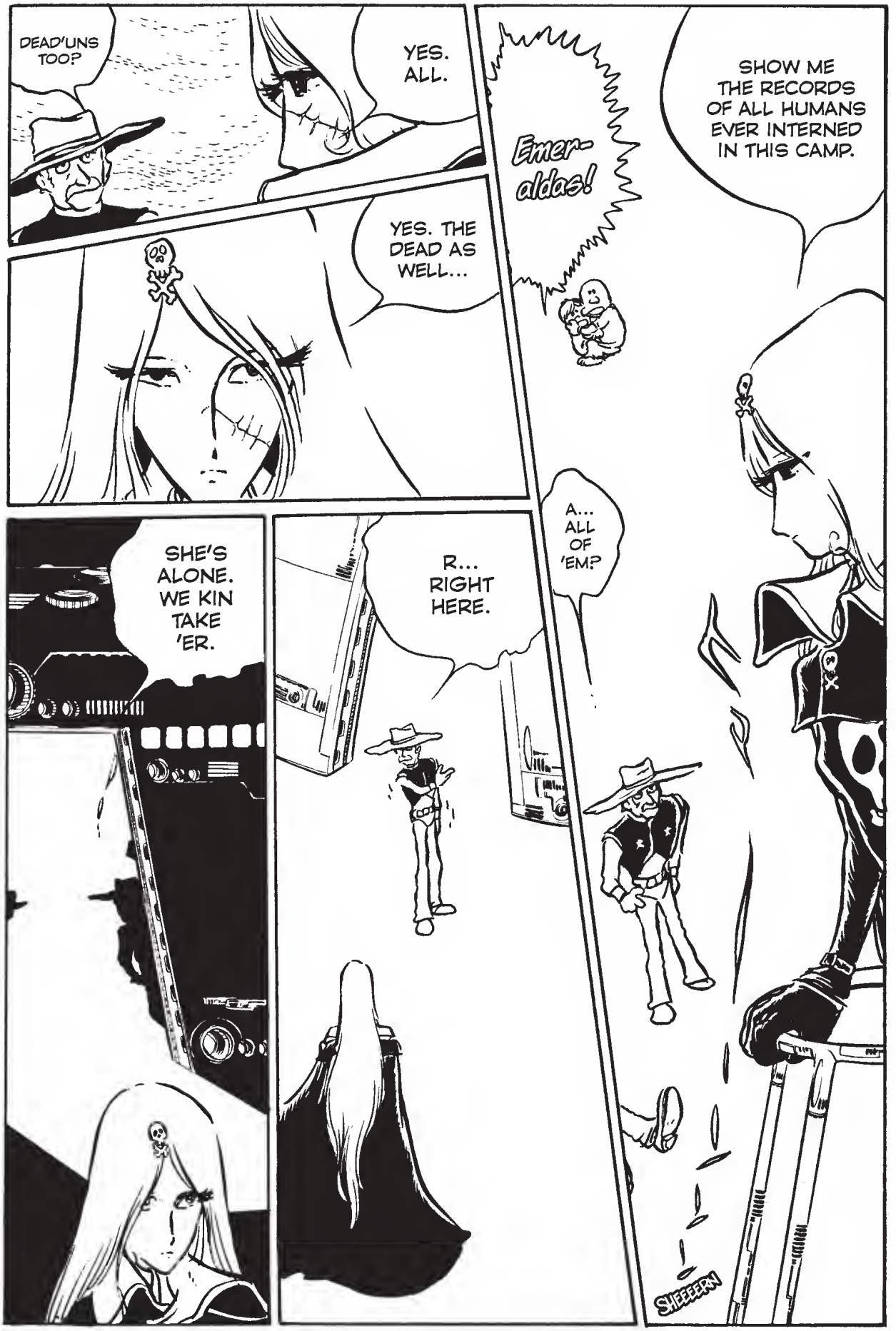

SCUM!! TIME YOU SEE WHAT HAPPENS TA ANYONE TRIES TA MAKE A RUN FOR IT. NO ONE ESCAPES THE HUMAN RANCH!!

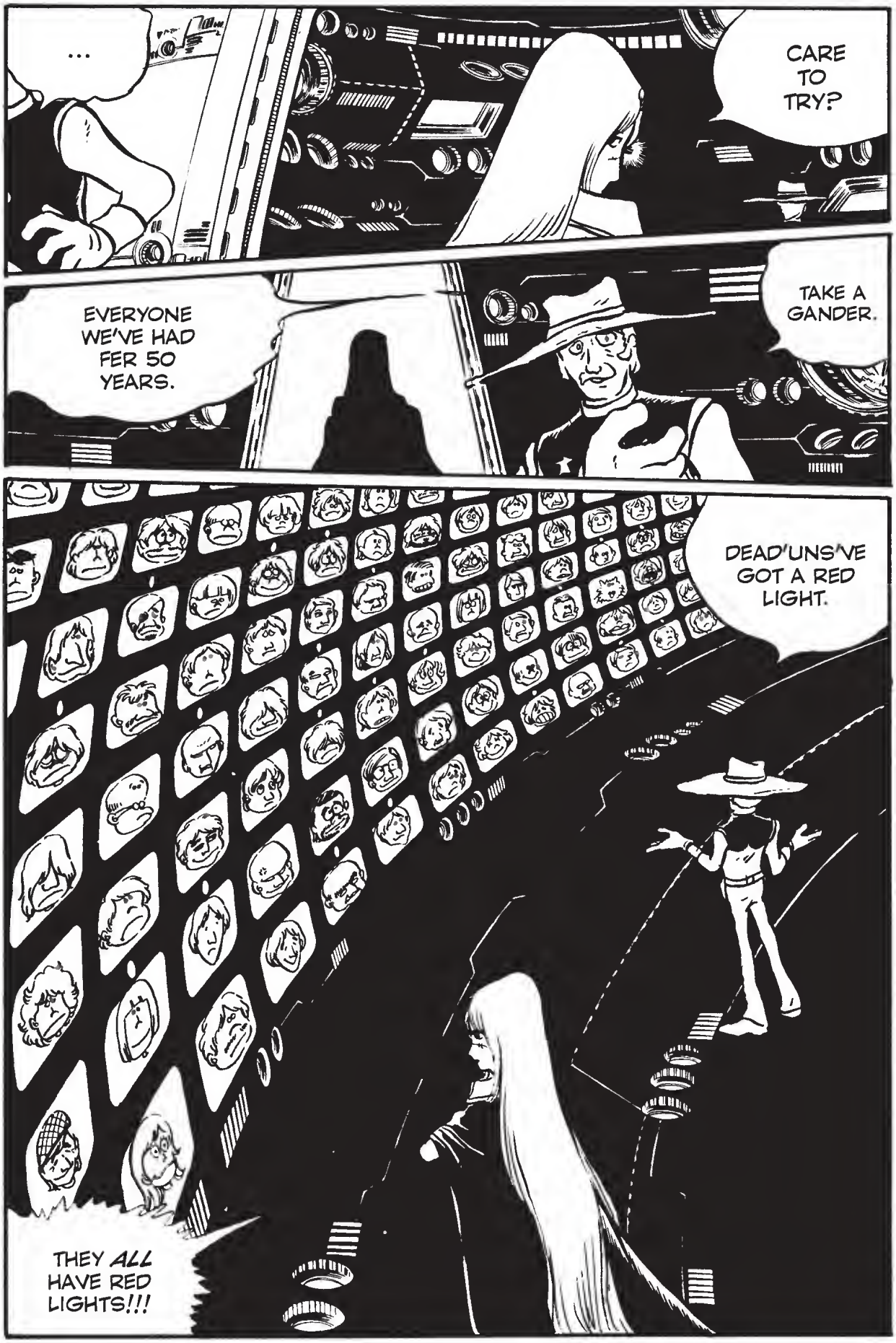
PLEASE, NO! NOT THE CHILD! I'LL TAKE ALL 600!!
THREE HUNDRED LASHES WITH THE ELECTRO-WHIP!! EACH!!
Whaa Whaa...
SHUT IT!! OUTTA THE WAY!!
ZWARK
SHWOOOSH
OOF
GNNNN!

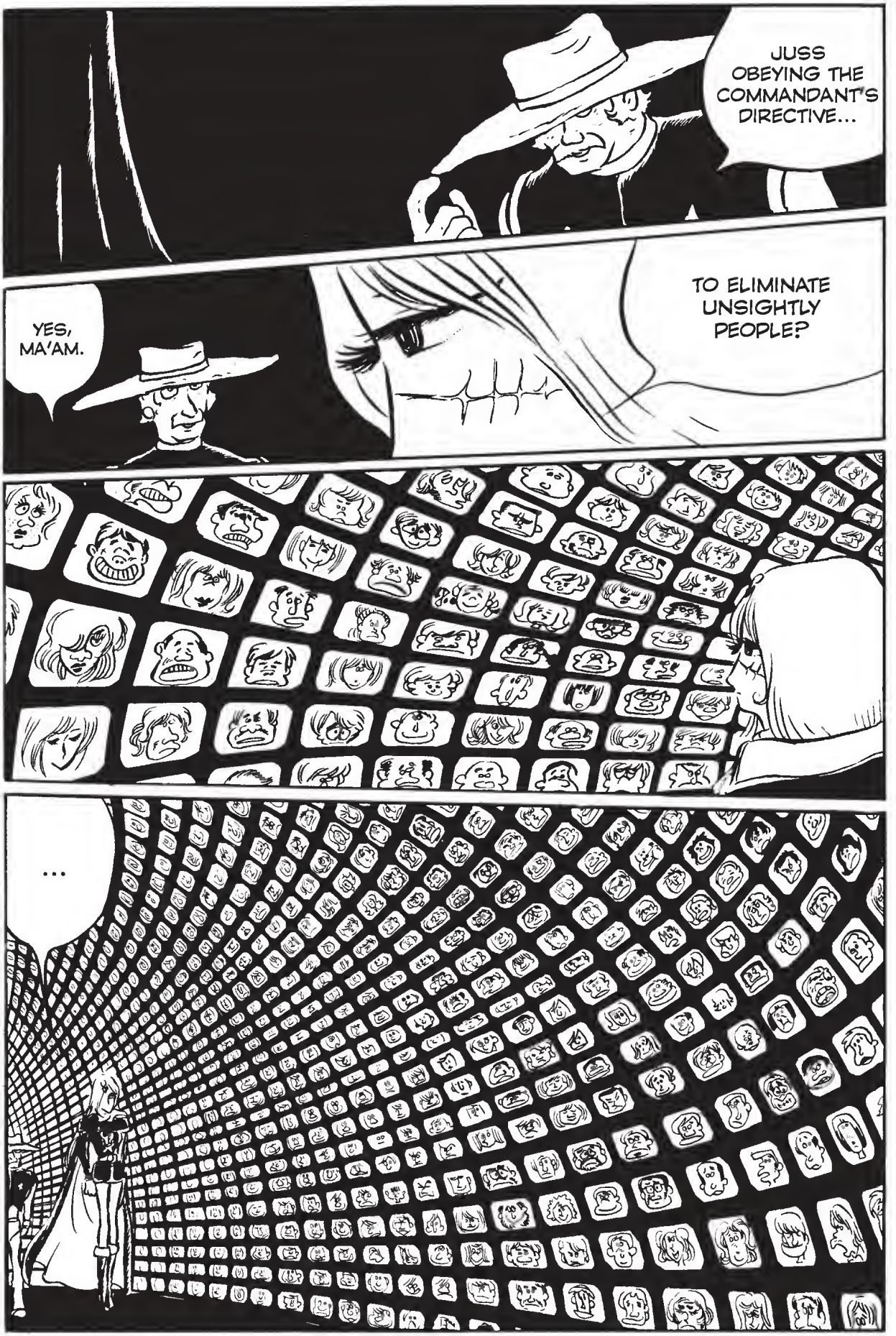

BE ON GUARD! THE QUEEN EMERALDAS IS APPROACHING.
WARDEN!! COMMANDANT WITH NEW ORDERS!!
SCREW THAT!! SHE'S HERE!!

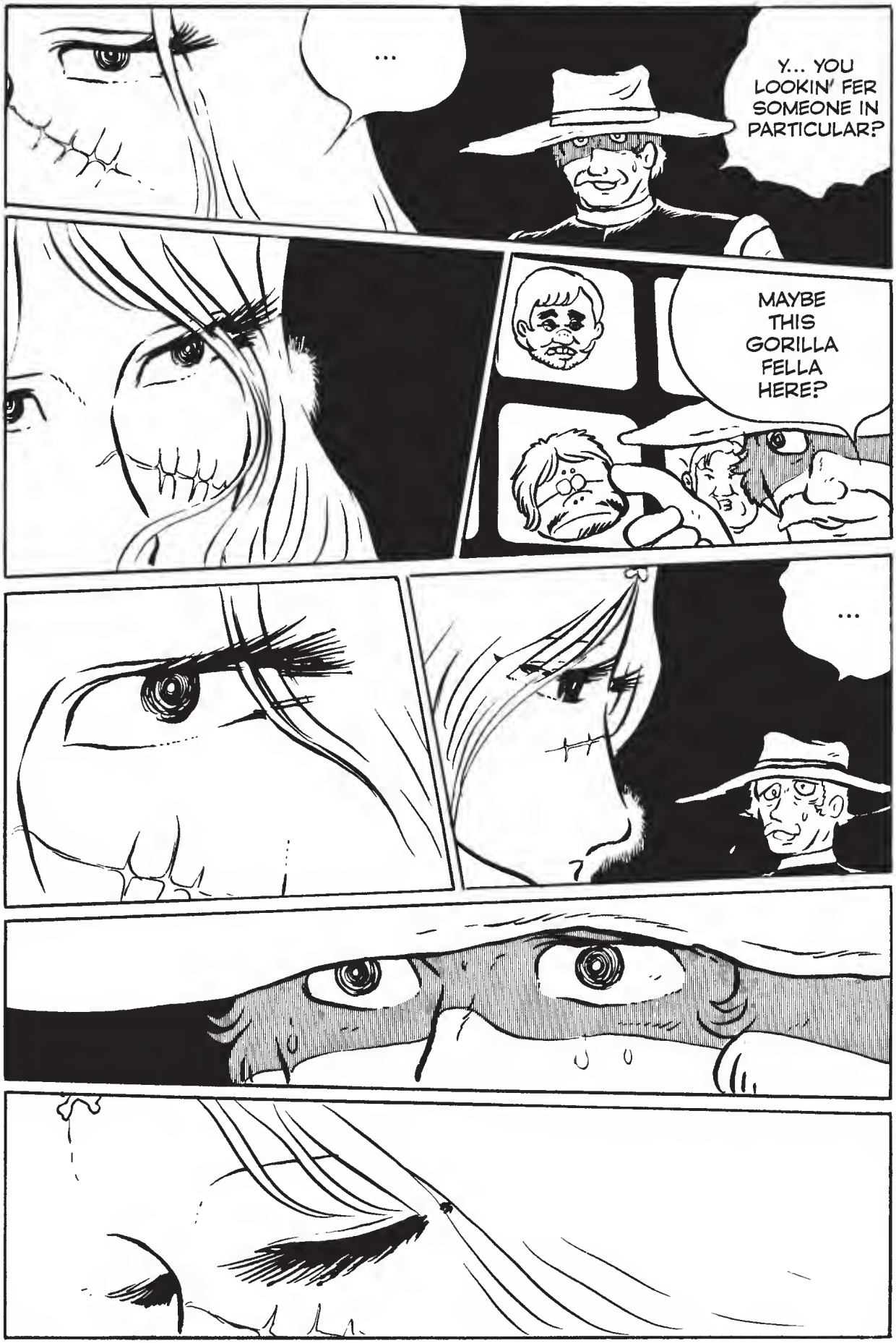

A PHANTOM ...
NOTHING ON OUR SENSORS... NO RADAR OR ANTIAIRCRAFT AIRFLOW SONAR...
WHERE THE HELL'S OUR PATROL WARNING?
WHAT-EVER!! SHOOT!!
IT'S HOPE-LESS...
KAAZZAAARK
BA-DOOOM
BOOM
BOOM


CEASE YOUR FUTILE RESISTANCE!
I'M NOT HERE FOR YOUR LIVES!!
!!

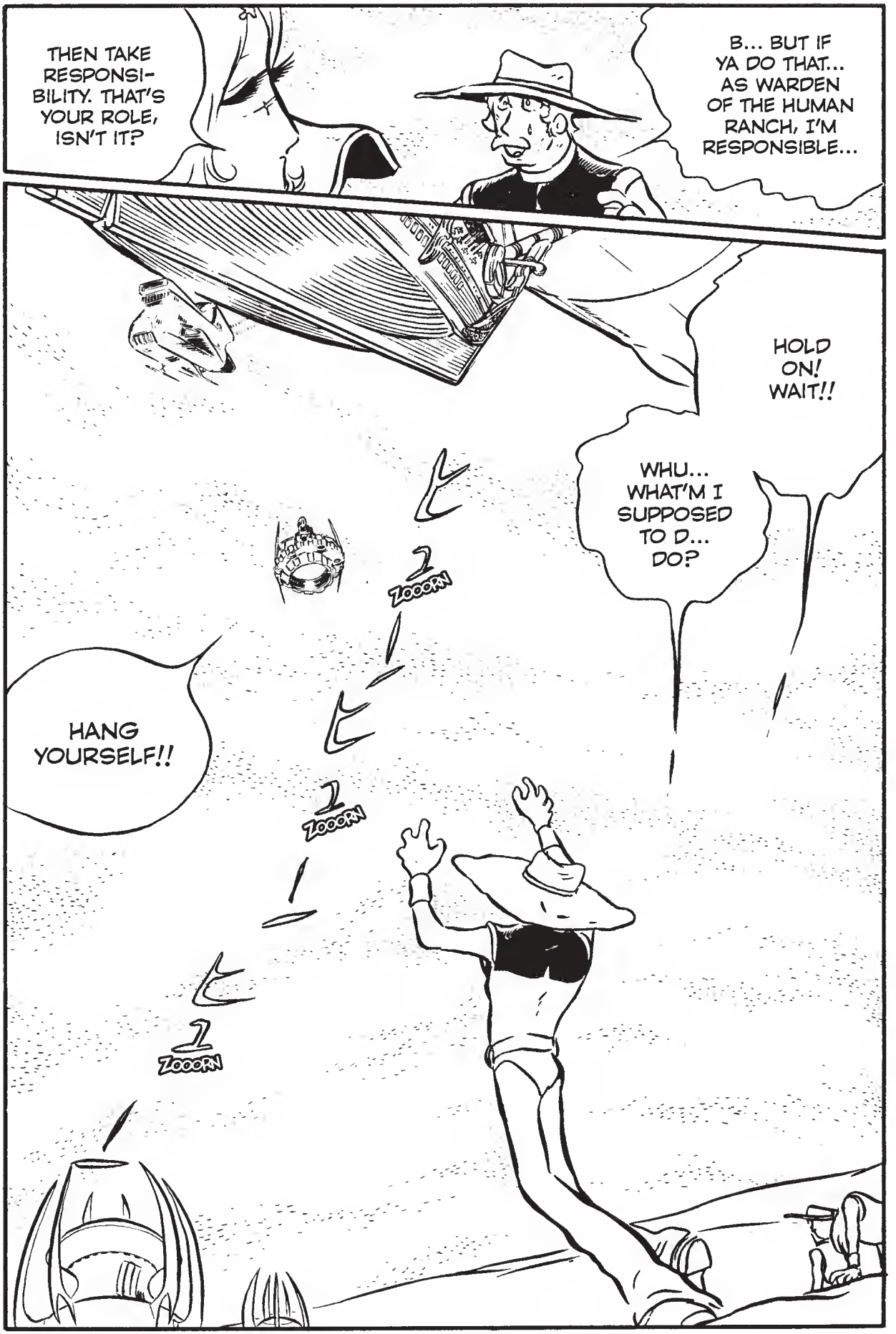

DEAD'UNS TOO?
YES. ALL.
YES. THE DEAD AS WELL...
Emer-aldas!
SHOW ME THE RECORDS OF ALL HUMANS EVER INTERNED IN THIS CAMP.
A... ALL OF 'EM?
R... RIGHT HERE.
SHE'S ALONE. WE KIN TAKE 'ER.
SHEEEERN

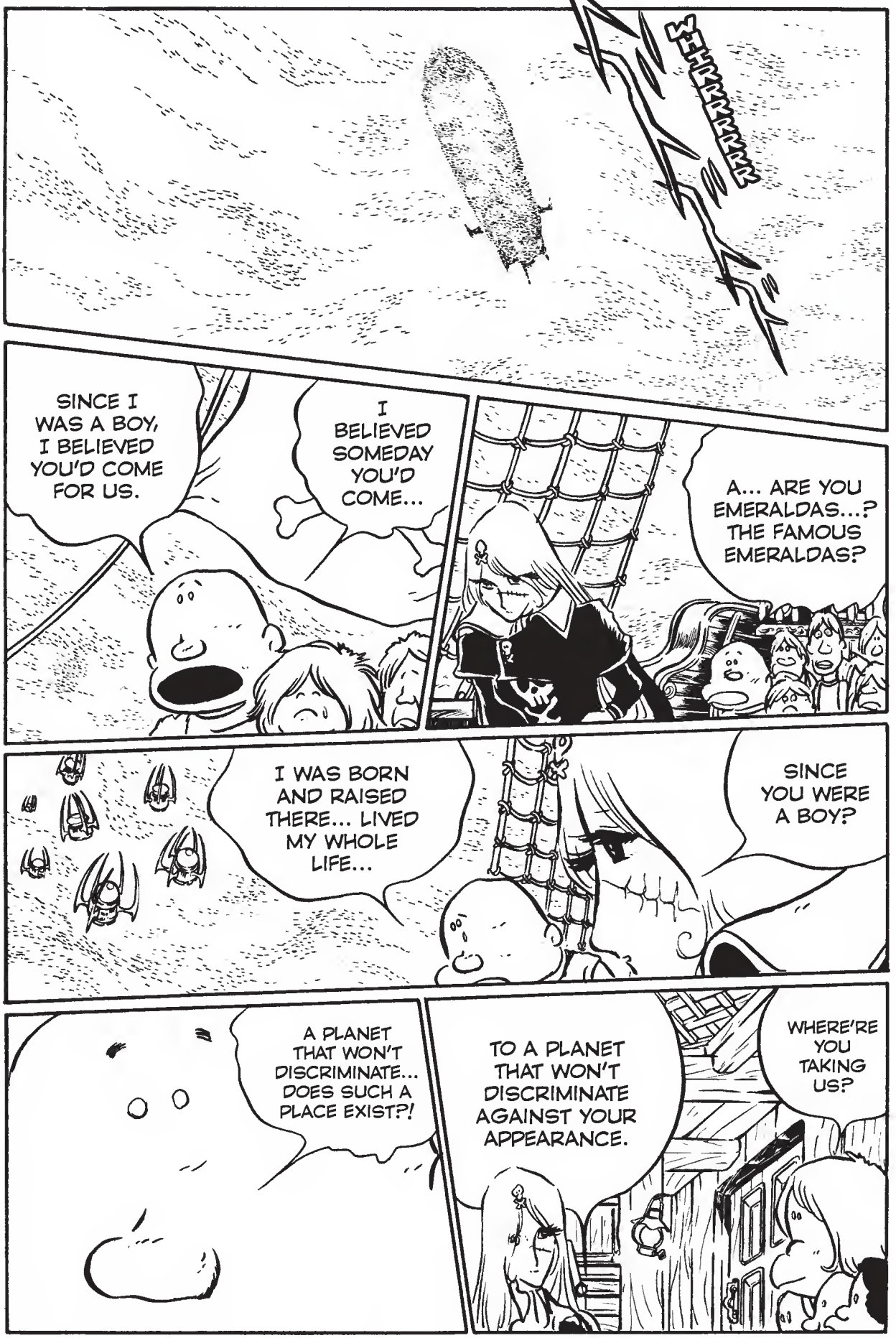

...
CARE TO TRY?
TAKE A GANDER.
EVERYONE WE'VE HAD FER 50 YEARS.
DEAD'UNS'VE GOT A RED LIGHT.
THEY ALL HAVE RED LIGHTS!!!

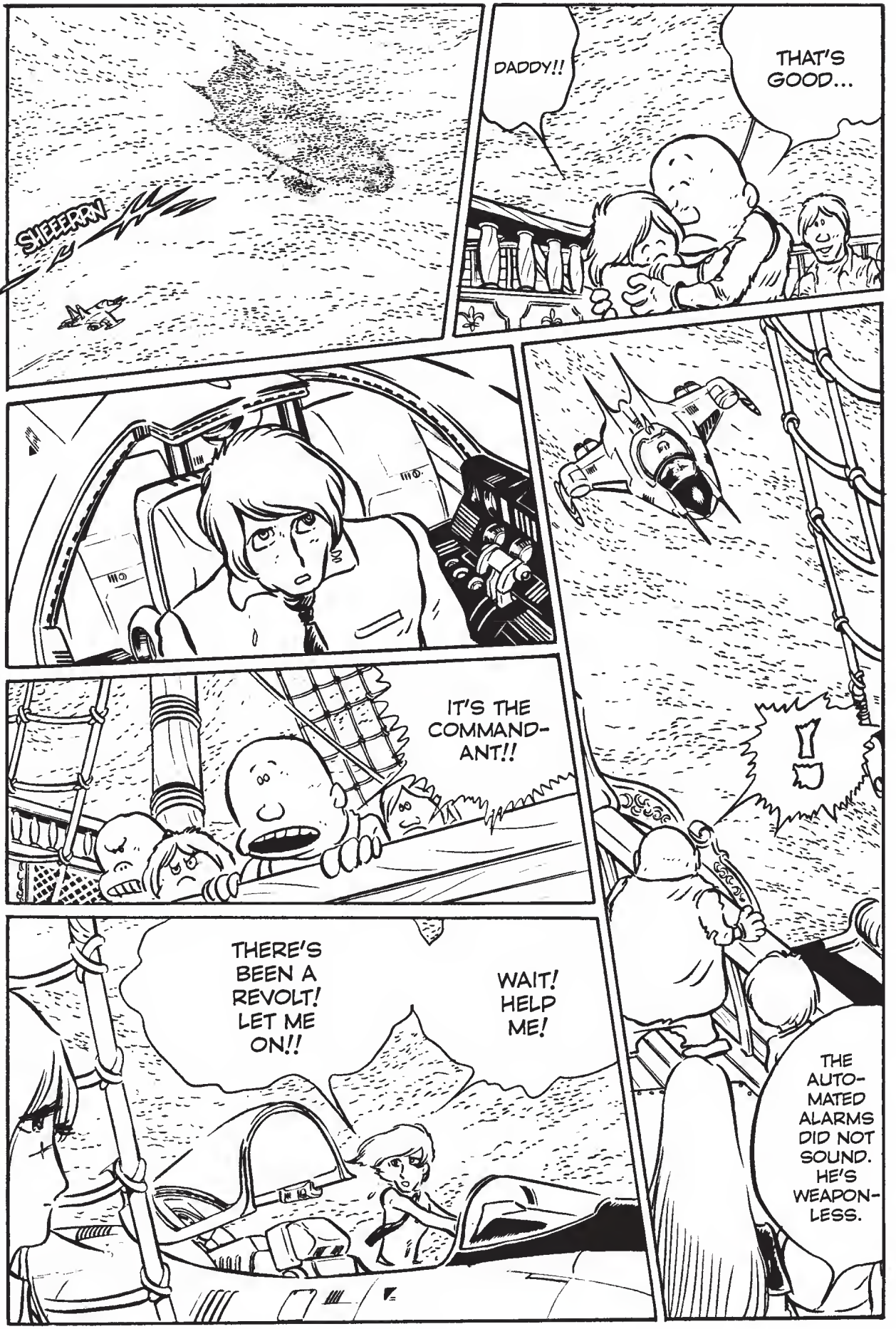

JUSS OBEYING THE COMMANDANT'S DIRECTIVE...
TO ELIMINATE UNSIGHTLY PEOPLE?
YES, MA'AM.
...

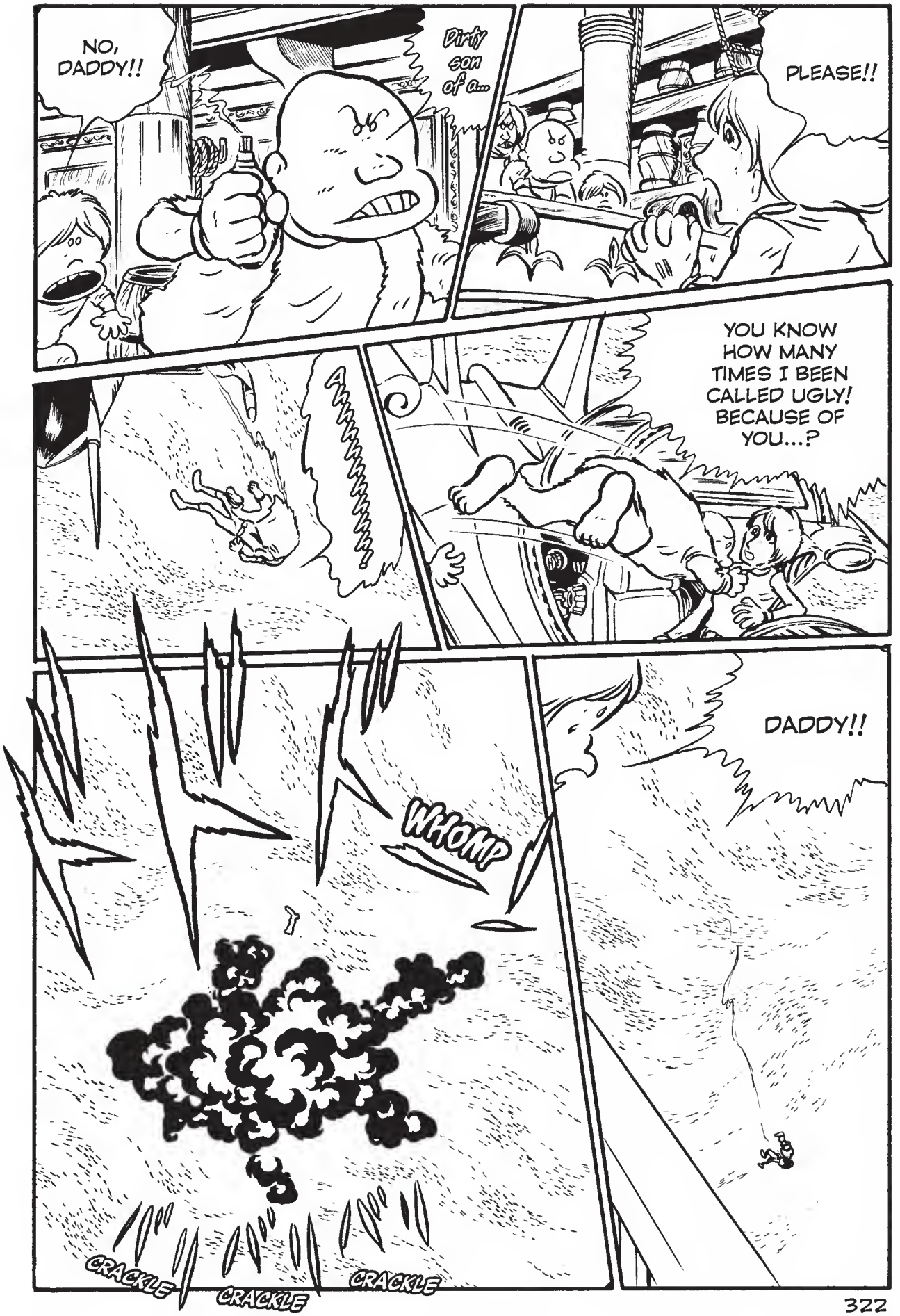

...
Y... YOU LOOKIN' FER SOMEONE IN PARTICULAR?
MAYBE THIS GORILLA FELLA HERE?
...

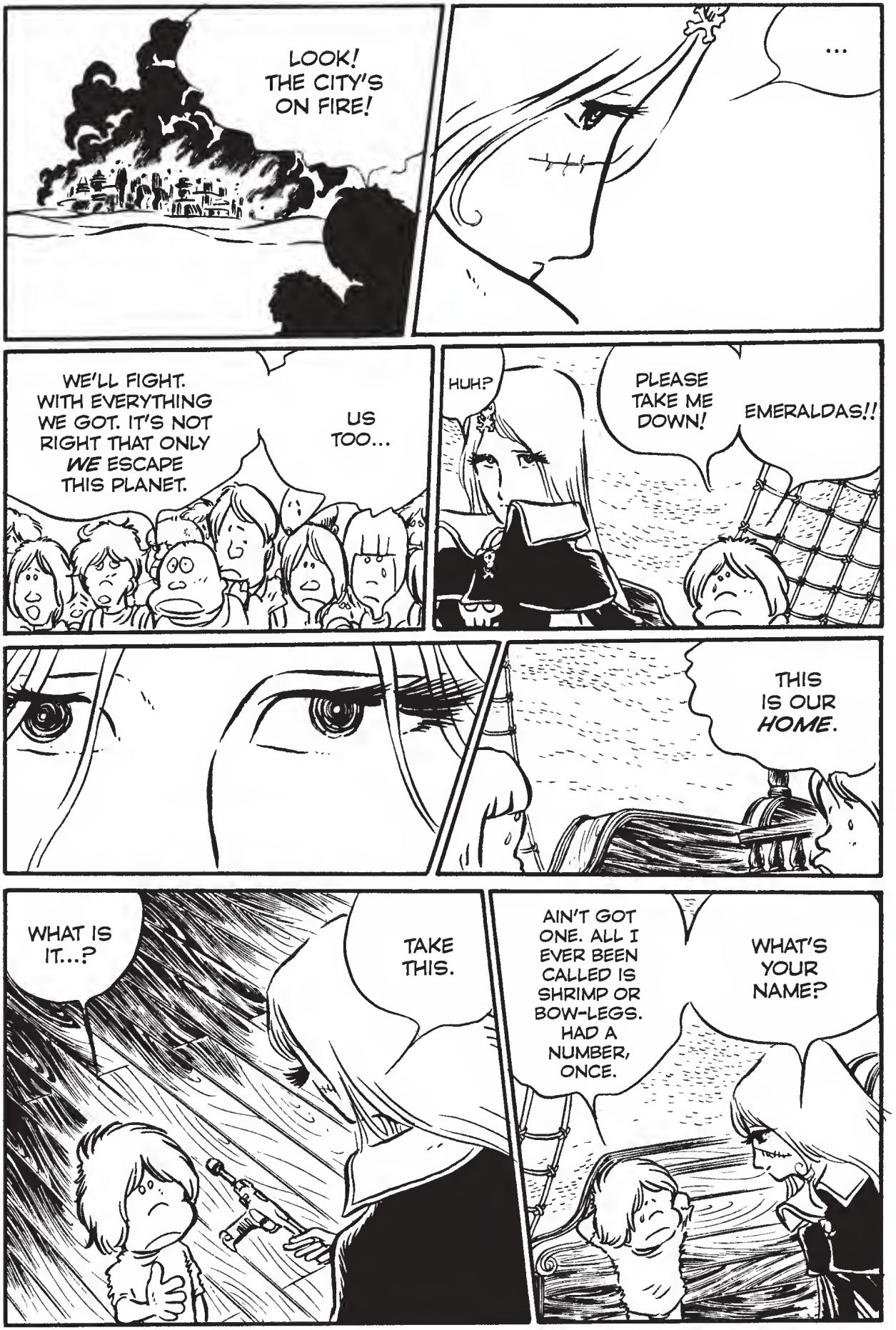
UH...
HE'S NOT HERE.
HE NEVER CAME HERE!!
I DIDN'T THINK HE WOULD, BUT...
I AM GLAD I TRIED.
I'M TAKING THEM ALL.
WHAT?!

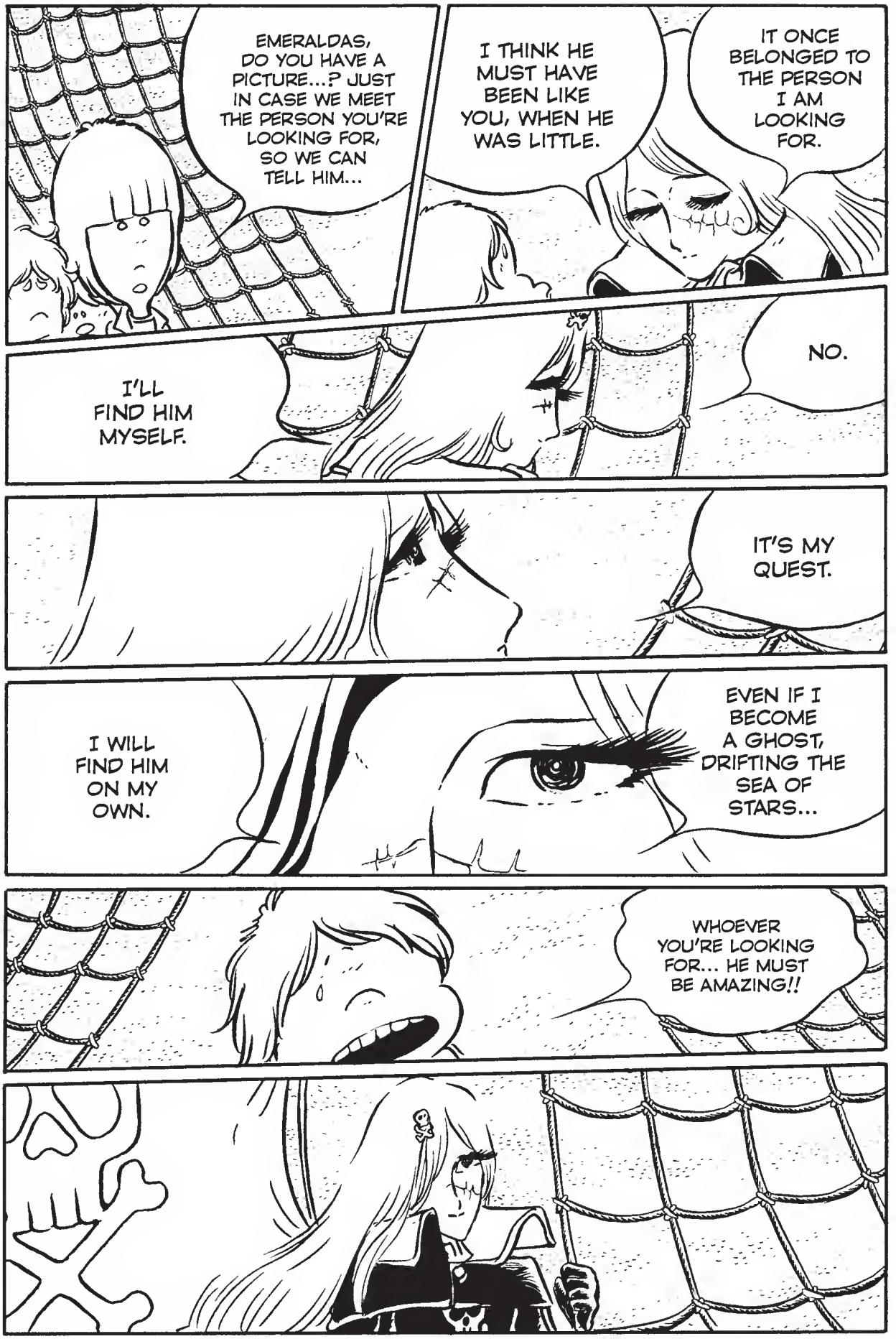

THEN TAKE RESPONSI-BILITY. THAT'S YOUR ROLE, ISN'T IT?
B... BUT IF YA DO THAT... AS WARDEN OF THE HUMAN RANCH, I'M RESPONSIBLE...
HOLD ON! WAIT!!
WHU... WHAT'M I SUPPOSED TO D... DO?
ZOOORN
ZOOORN
ZOOORN
HANG YOURSELF!!


KHAAAAAAR
SINCE I WAS A BOY, I BELIEVED YOU'D COME FOR US.
I BELIEVED SOMEDAY YOU'D COME...
A... ARE YOU EMERALDAS...? THE FAMOUS EMERALDAS?
I WAS BORN AND RAISED THERE... LIVED MY WHOLE LIFE...
SINCE YOU WERE A BOY?
A PLANET THAT WON'T DISCRIMINATE... DOES SUCH A PLACE EXIST?!
TO A PLANET THAT WON'T DISCRIMINATE AGAINST YOUR APPEARANCE.
WHERE'RE YOU TAKING US?

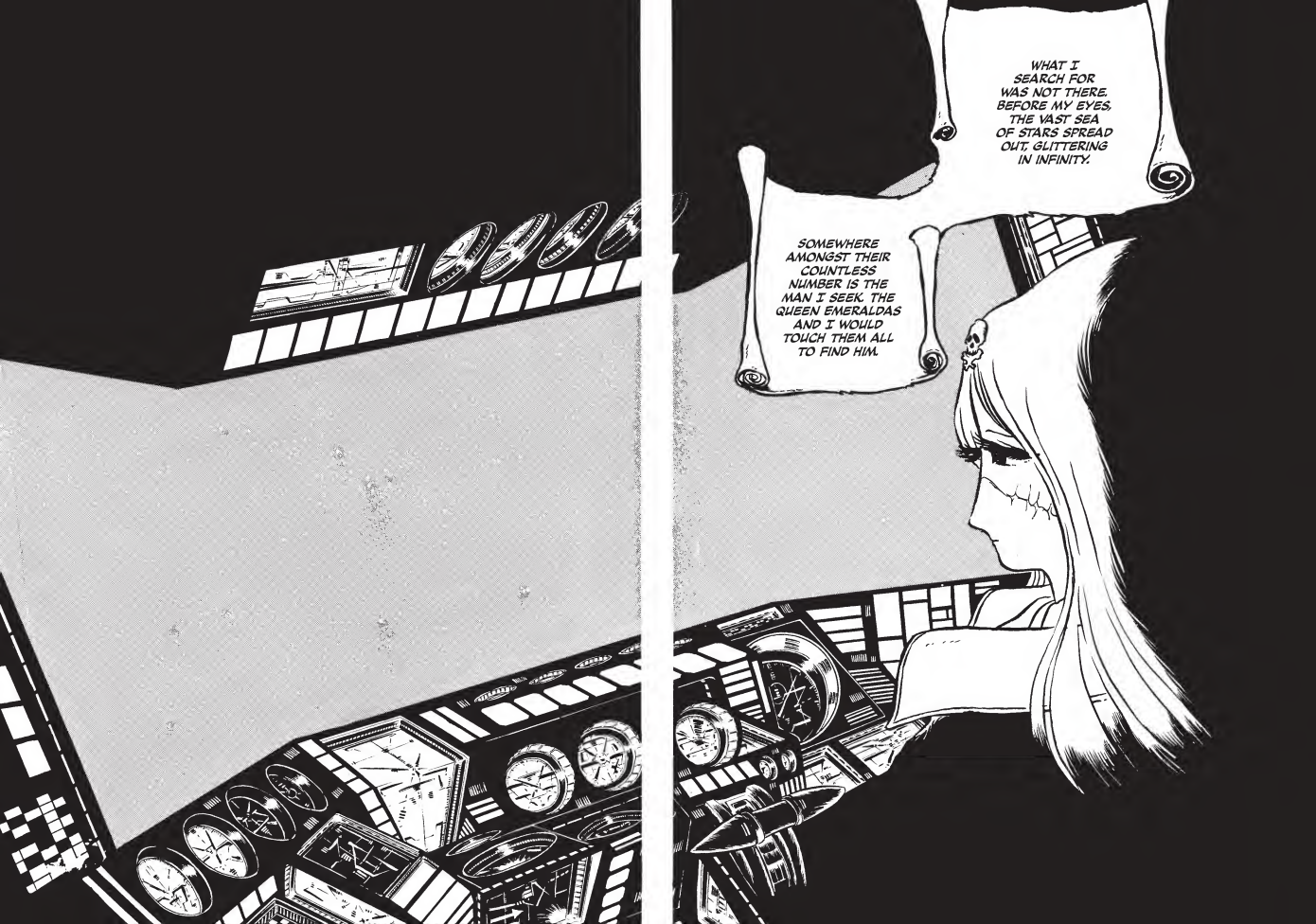

SHEEERRR!
DADDY!!
THAT'S GOOD...
IT'S THE COMMAND-ANT!!
THERE'S BEEN A REVOLT! LET ME ON!!
WAIT! HELP ME!
THE AUTO-MATED ALARMS DID NOT SOUND. HE'S WEAPON-LESS.

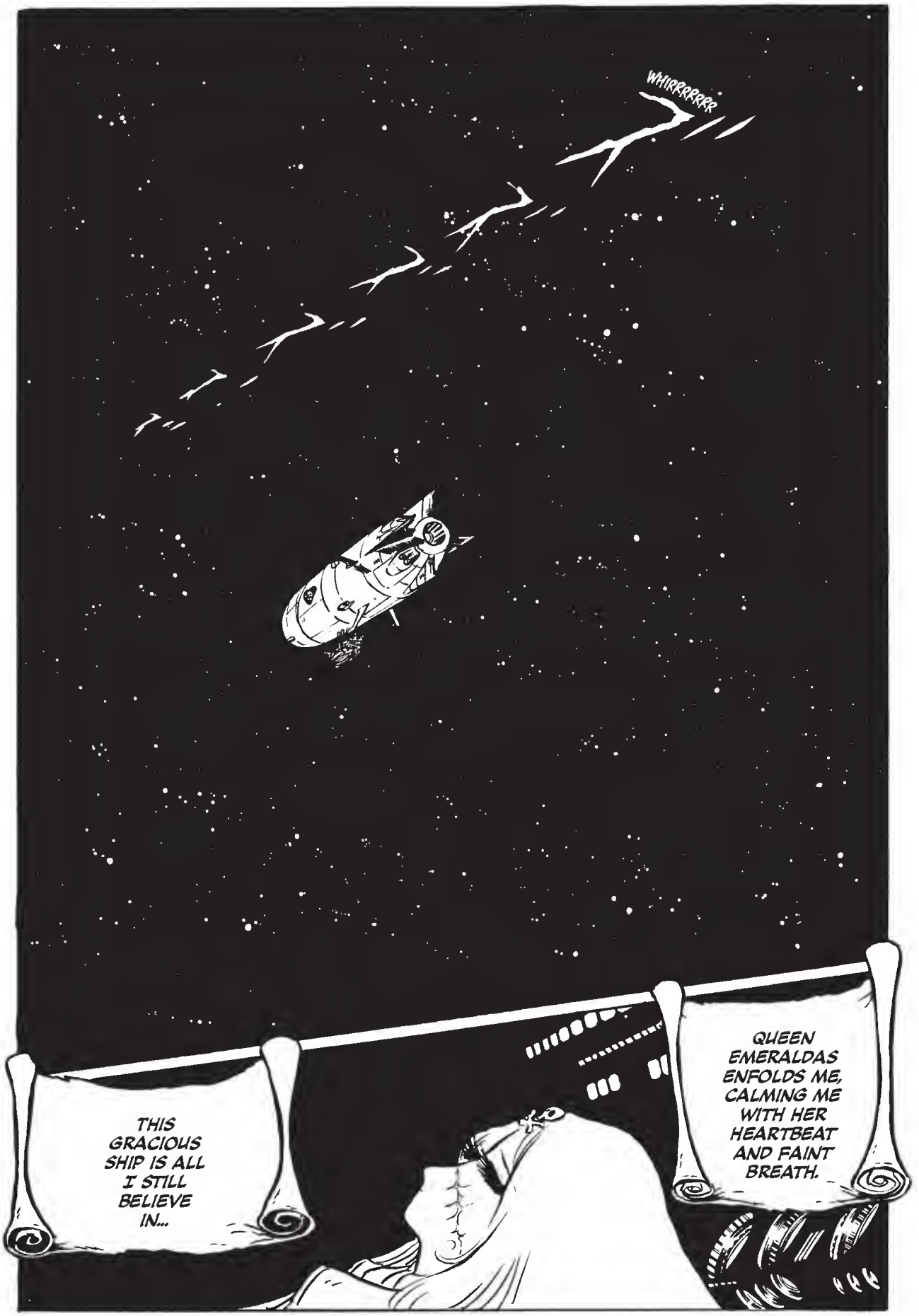

NO, DADDY!!
Dirty son of a...
PLEASE!!
YOU KNOW HOW MANY TIMES I BEEN CALLED UGLY! BECAUSE OF YOU...?
AAAAAAAAAH!
DADDY!!
WHOMP
CRACKLE
CRACKLE
CRACKLE

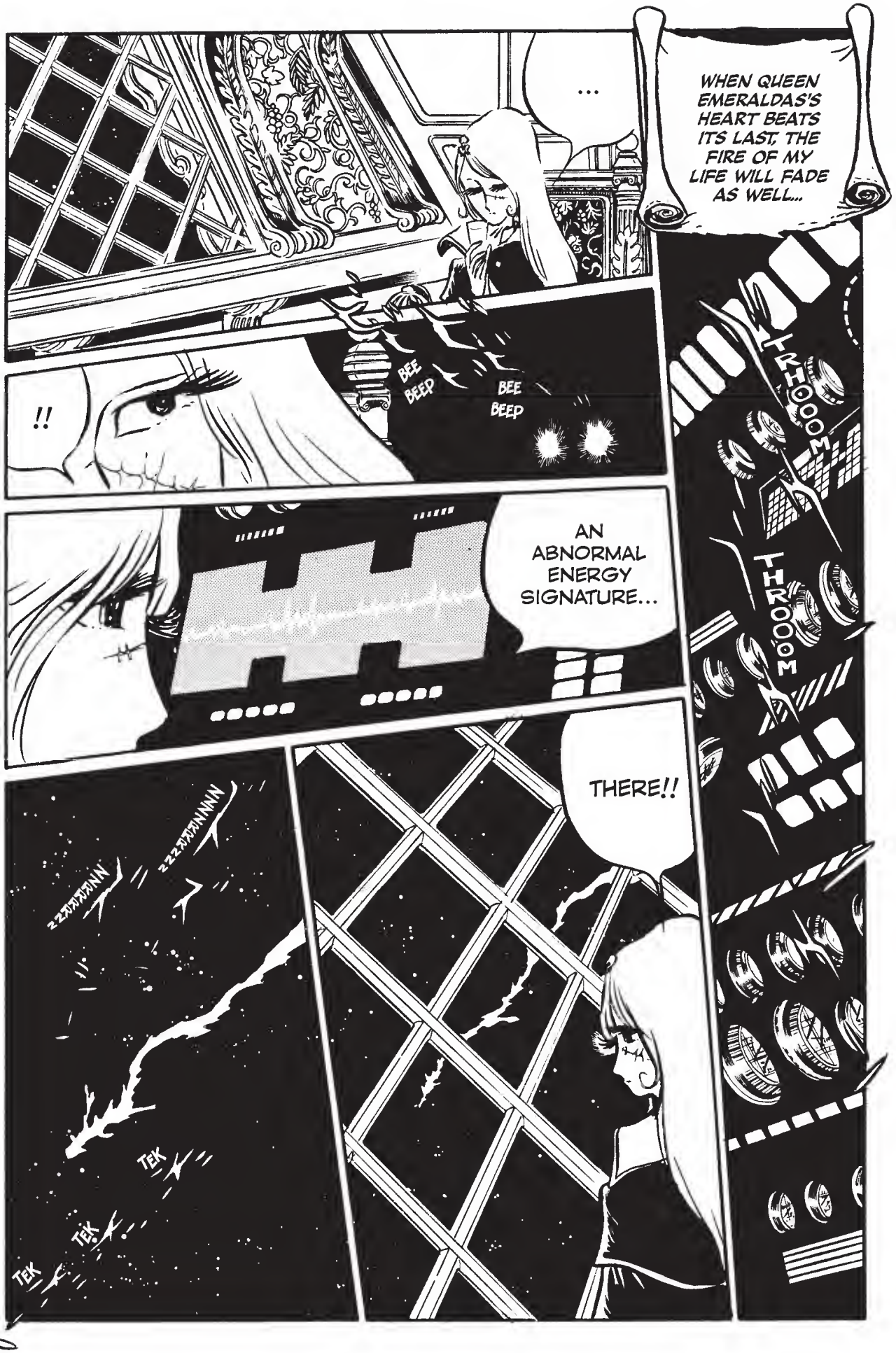

LOOK! THE CITY'S ON FIRE!
...
WE'LL FIGHT. WITH EVERYTHING WE GOT. IT'S NOT RIGHT THAT ONLY *WE* ESCAPE THIS PLANET.
US TOO...
HUH?
PLEASE TAKE ME DOWN!
EMERALDAS!!
THIS IS OUR *HOME*.
WHAT IS IT...?
TAKE THIS.
AIN'T GOT ONE. ALL I EVER BEEN CALLED IS SHRIMP OR BOW-LEGS. HAD A NUMBER, ONCE.
WHAT'S YOUR NAME?

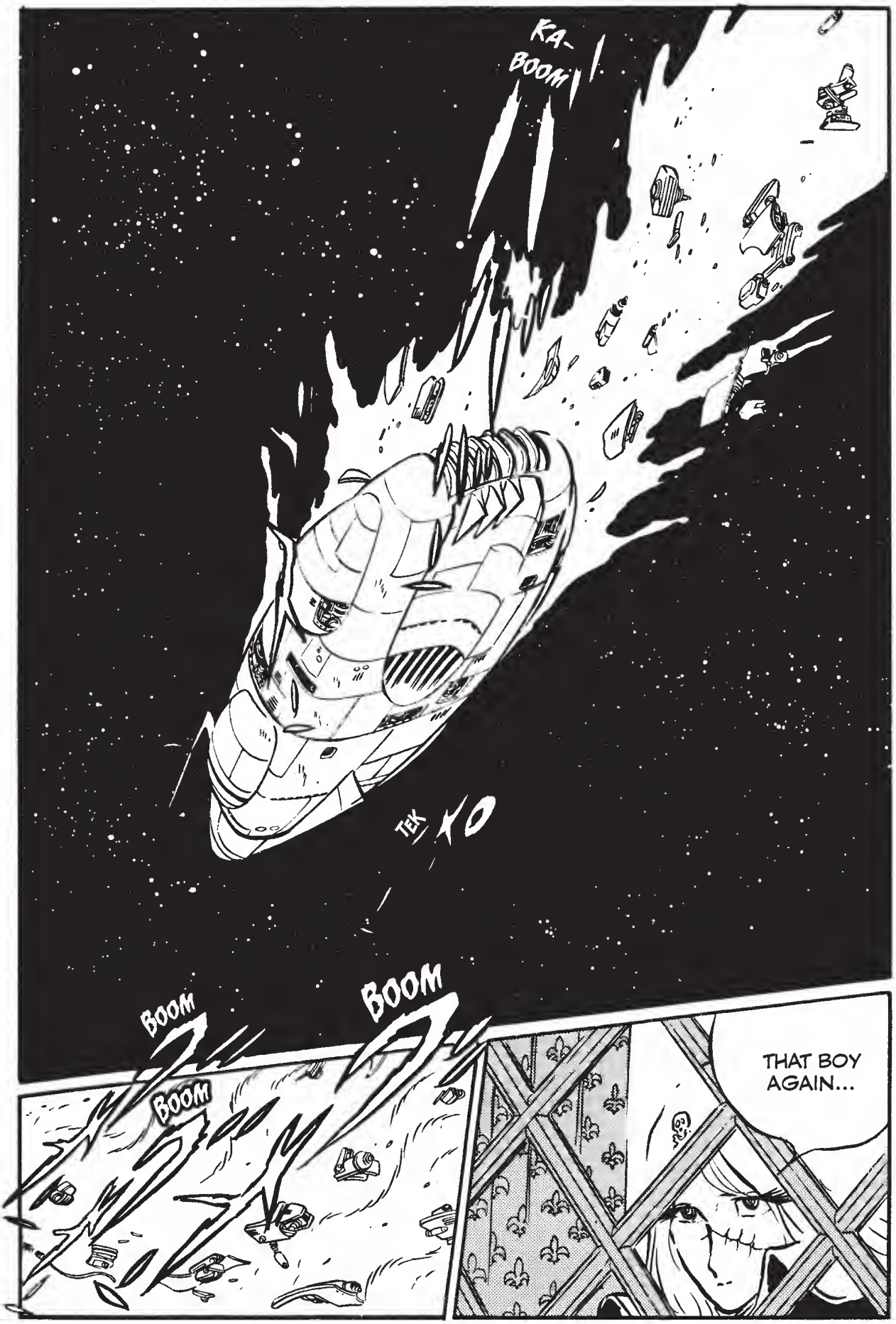

EMERALDAS, DO YOU HAVE A PICTURE...? JUST IN CASE WE MEET THE PERSON YOU'RE LOOKING FOR, SO WE CAN TELL HIM...
I THINK HE MUST HAVE BEEN LIKE YOU, WHEN HE WAS LITTLE.
IT ONCE BELONGED TO THE PERSON I AM LOOKING FOR.
I'LL FIND HIM MYSELF.
NO.
IT'S MY QUEST.
I WILL FIND HIM ON MY OWN.
EVEN IF I BECOME A GHOST, DRIFTING THE SEA OF STARS...
WHOEVER YOU'RE LOOKING FOR... HE MUST BE AMAZING!!

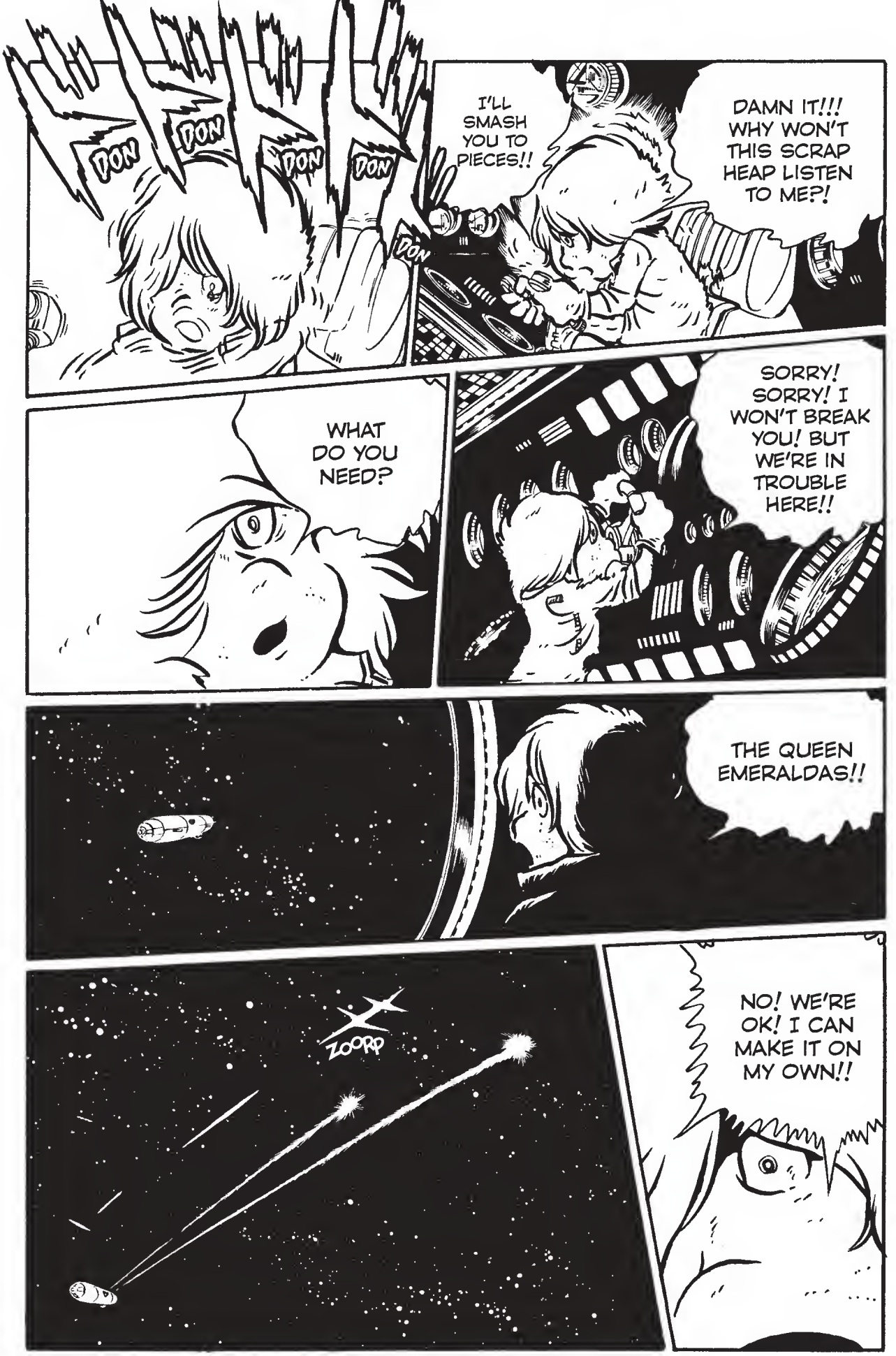
I AM EMERALDAS. I LEFT THAT PLANET IN THE HANDS OF THOSE WHO WOULD FIGHT TO BUILD A NEW WORLD...

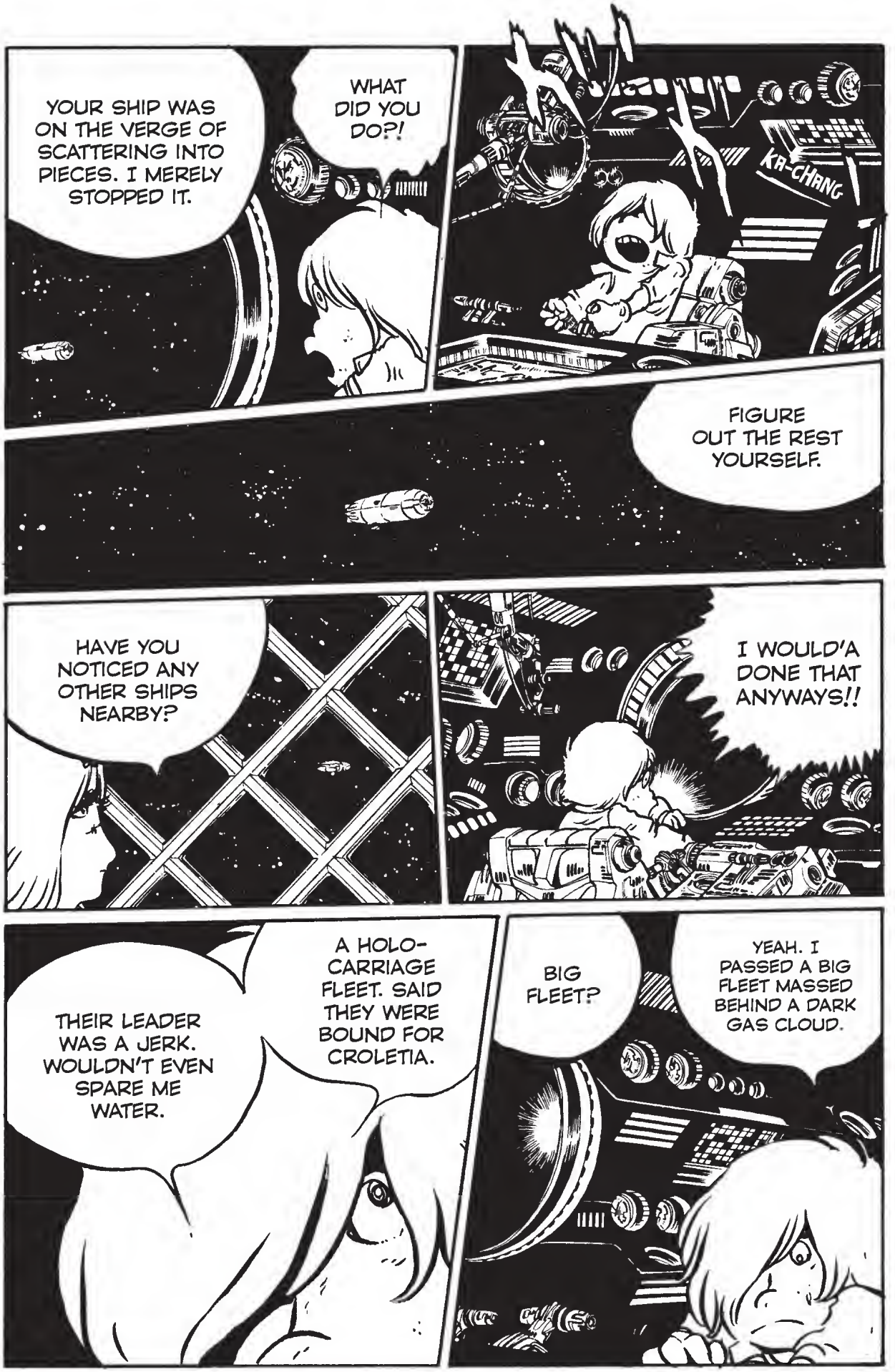

WHAT I SEARCH FOR WAS NOT THERE. BEFORE MY EYES, THE VAST SEA OF STARS SPREAD OUT, GLITTERING IN INFINITY.
SOMEWHERE AMONGST THEIR COUNTLESS NUMBER IS THE MAN I SEEK. THE QUEEN EMERALDAS AND I WOULD TOUCH THEM ALL TO FIND HIM.

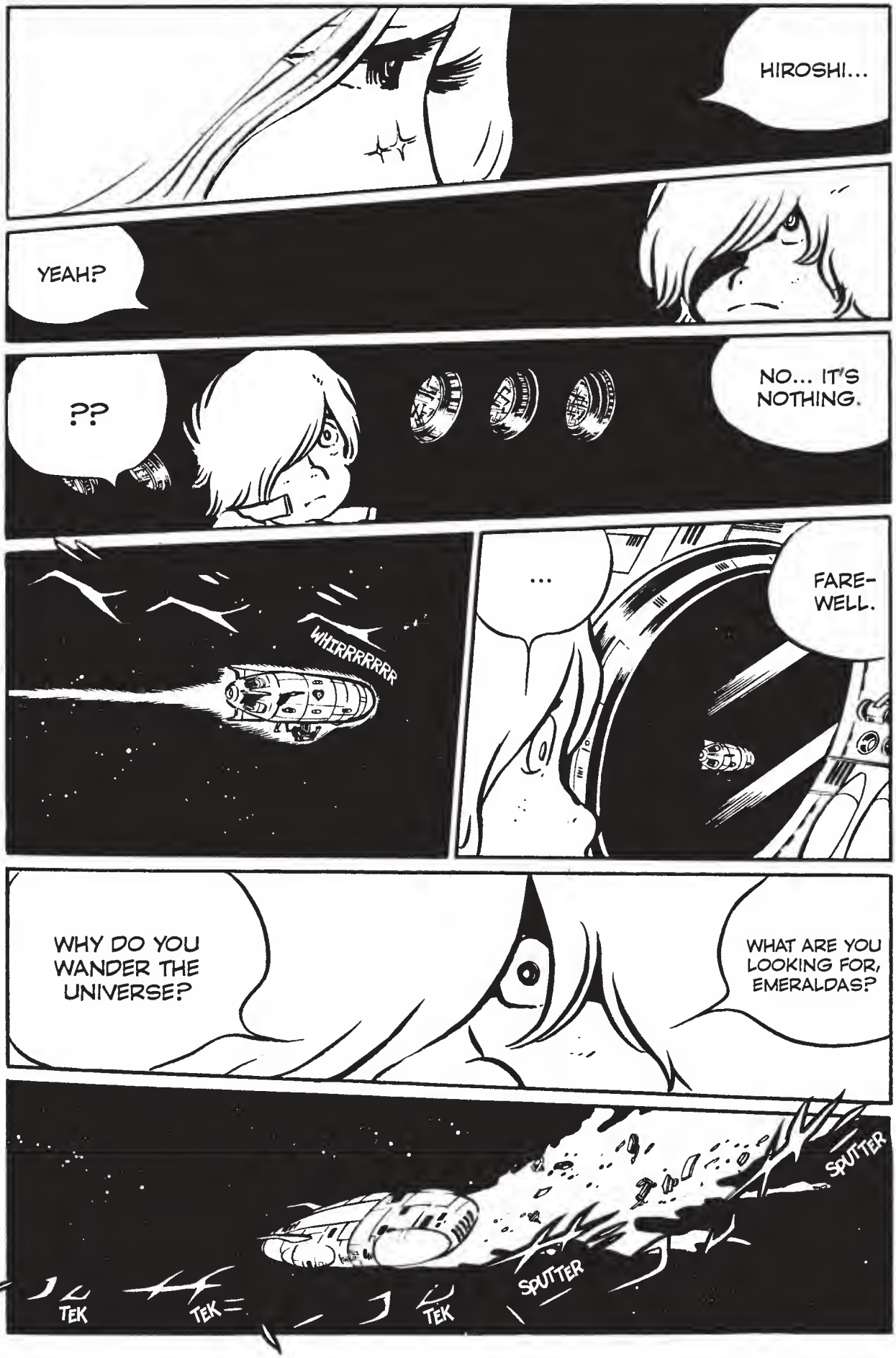

WHIRRRRRRR
THIS GRACIOUS SHIP IS ALL I STILL BELIEVE IN...
QUEEN EMERALDAS ENFOLDS ME, CALMING ME WITH HER HEARTBEAT AND FAINT BREATH.

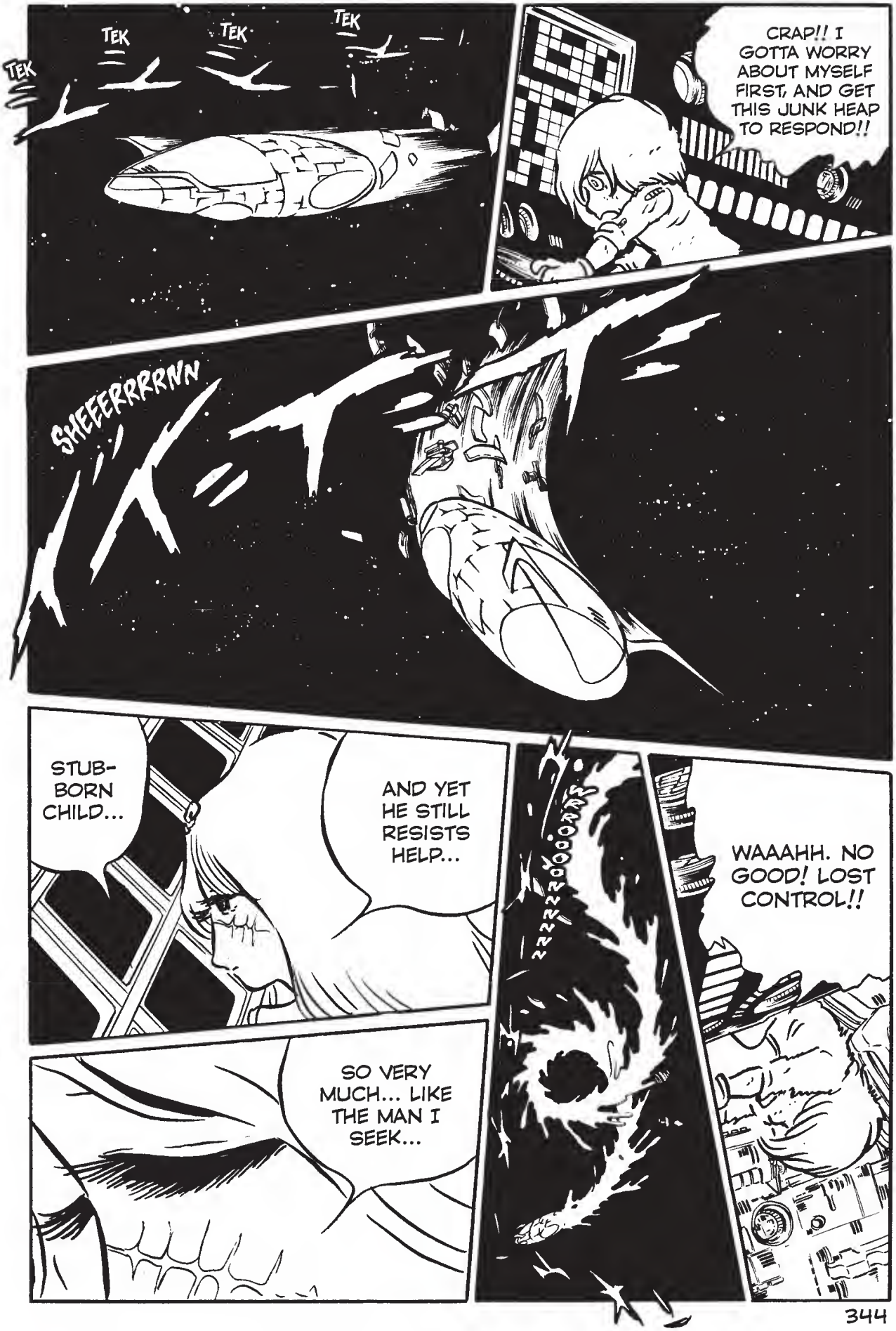

...
WHEN QUEEN EMERALDAS'S HEART BEATS ITS LAST, THE FIRE OF MY LIFE WILL FADE AS WELL...
!!
BEE BEEP
BEE BEEP
THROOOM
THROOOM
AN ABNORMAL ENERGY SIGNATURE...
THERE!!
NNNNNZZZZZ
NNNNNZZZZZ
TEK
TEK
TEK

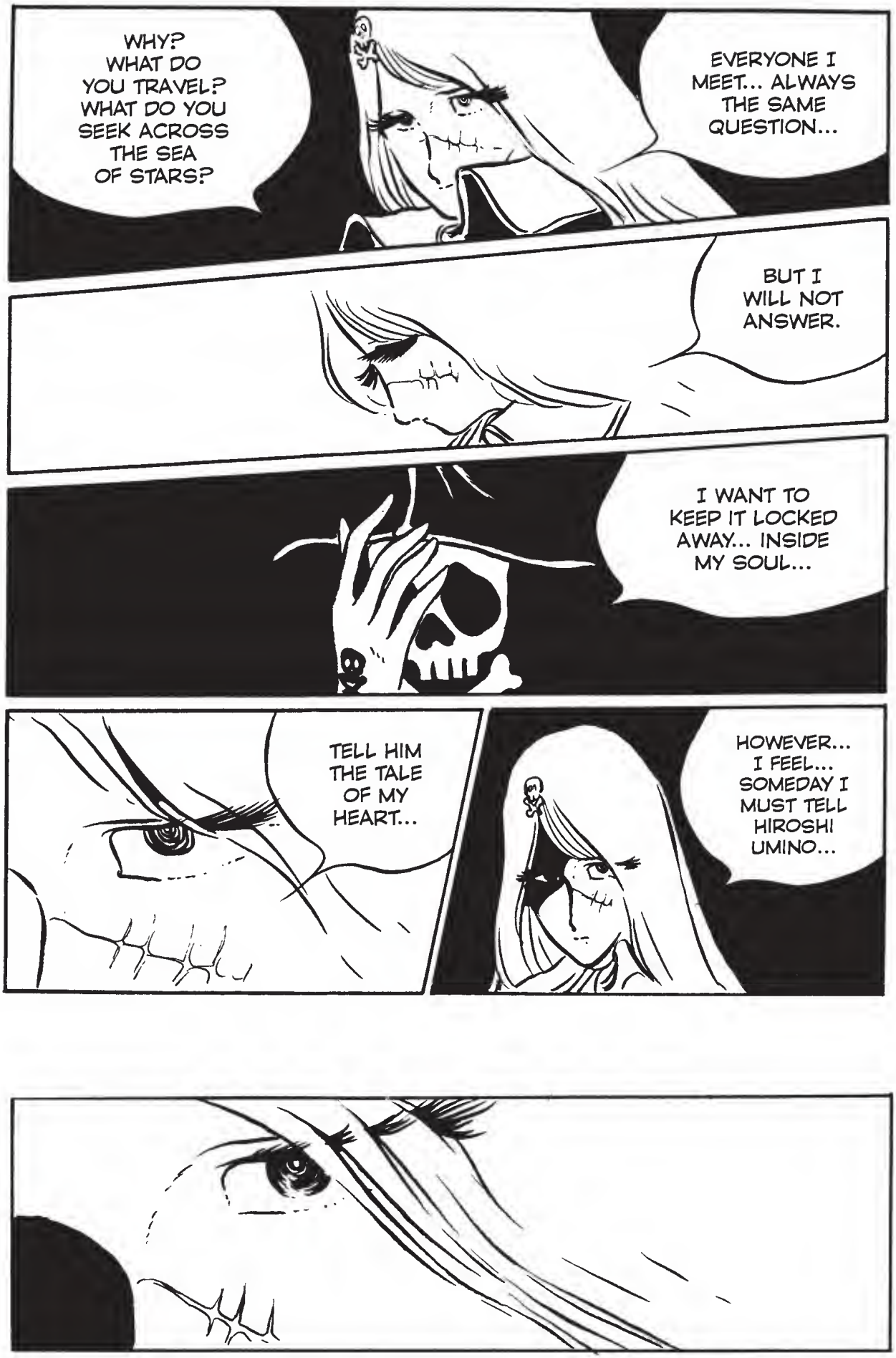

KA-BOOM
TEK XO
BOOM
BOOM
BOOM
THAT BOY AGAIN...

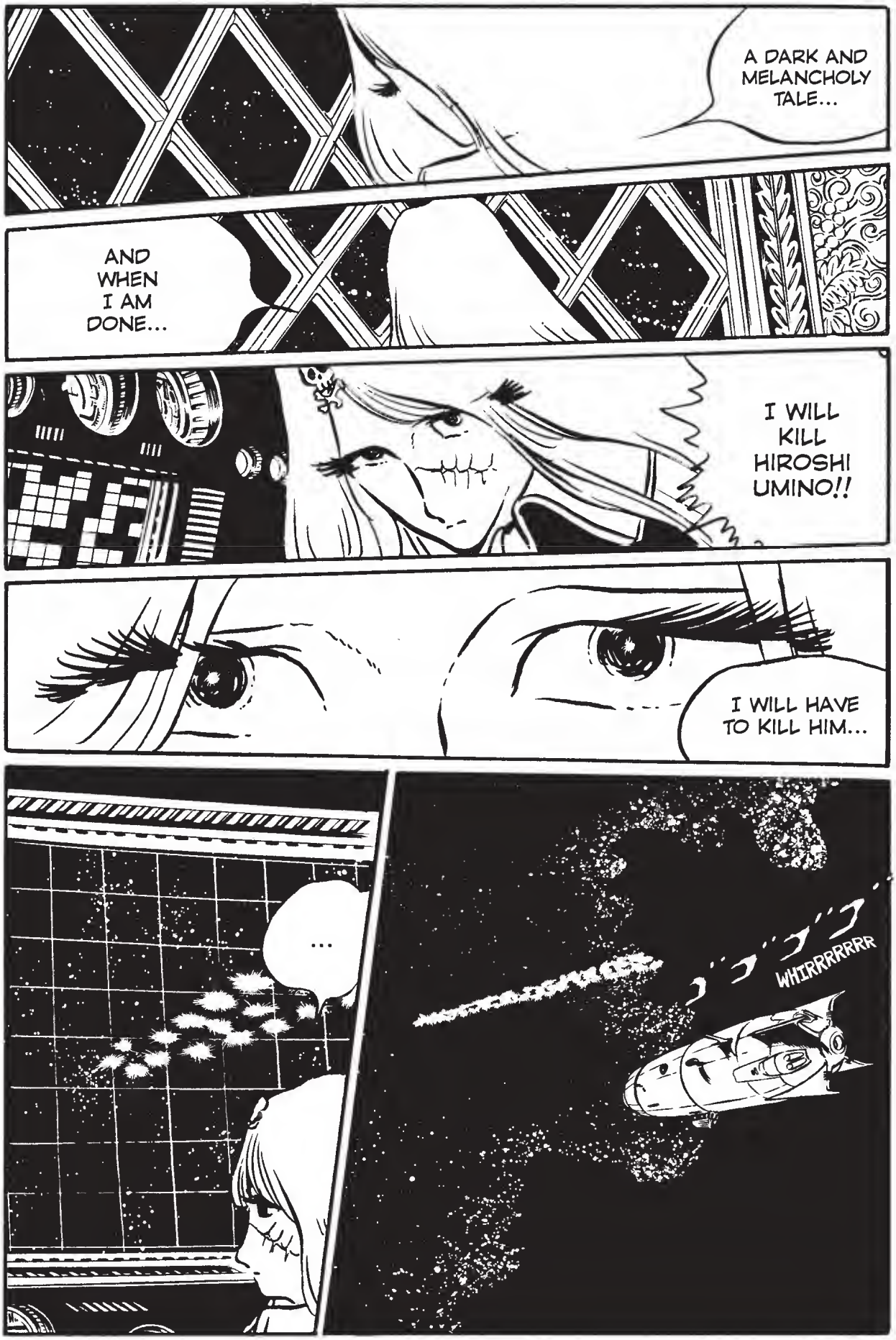

DON
DON
DON
DON
DON
I'LL SMASH YOU TO PIECES!!
DAMN IT!!! WHY WON'T THIS SCRAP HEAP LISTEN TO ME?!
WHAT DO YOU NEED?
SORRY! SORRY! I WON'T BREAK YOU! BUT WE'RE IN TROUBLE HERE!!
THE QUEEN EMERALDAS!!
ZOORP
NO! WE'RE OK! I CAN MAKE IT ON MY OWN!!

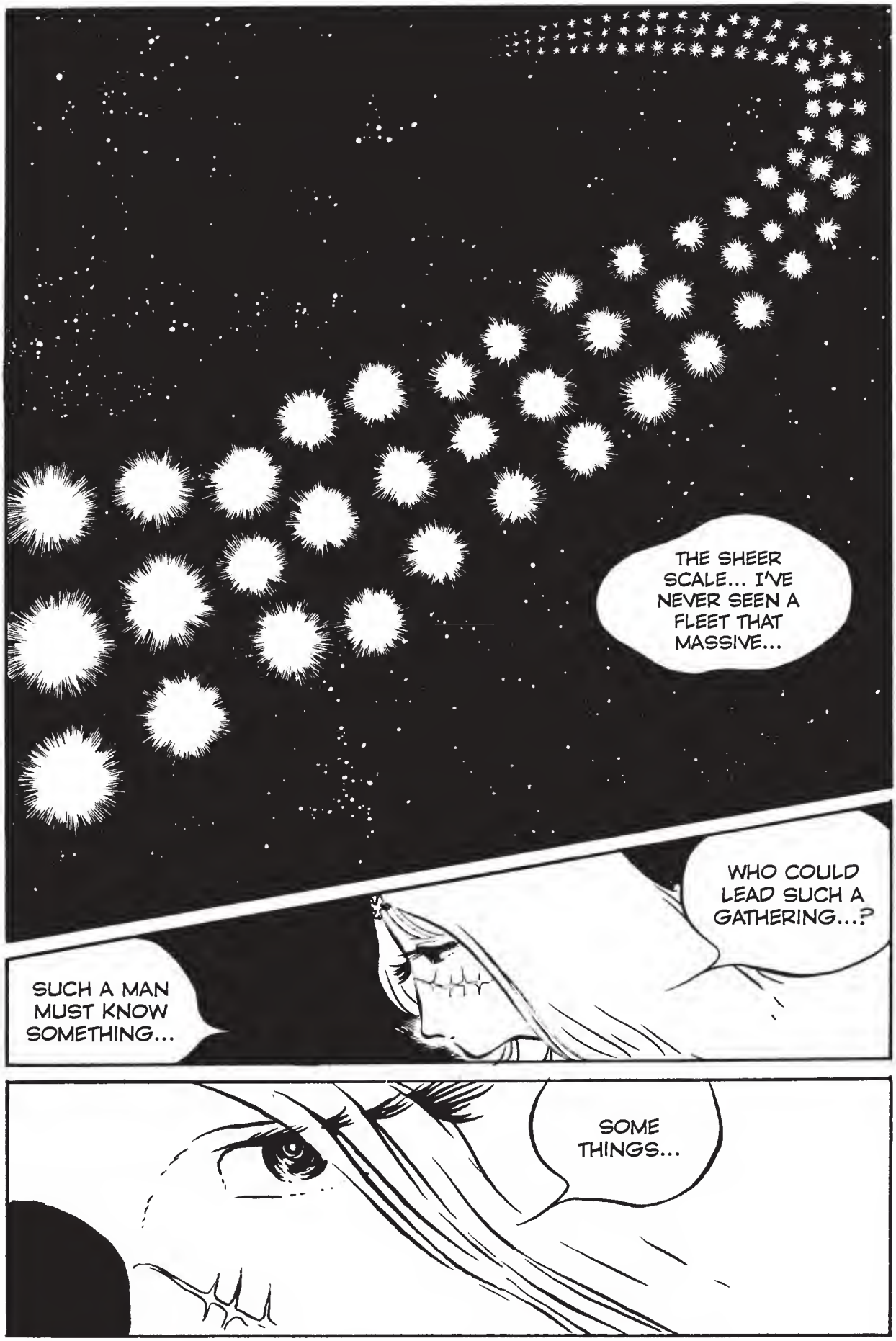

YOUR SHIP WAS ON THE VERGE OF SCATTERING INTO PIECES. I MERELY STOPPED IT.
WHAT DID YOU DO?!
KA-CHANG
FIGURE OUT THE REST YOURSELF.
HAVE YOU NOTICED ANY OTHER SHIPS NEARBY?
I WOULD'A DONE THAT ANYWAYS!!
THEIR LEADER WAS A JERK. WOULDN'T EVEN SPARE ME WATER.
A HOLO-CARRIAGE FLEET. SAID THEY WERE BOUND FOR CROLETIA.
BIG FLEET?
YEAH. I PASSED A BIG FLEET MASSED BEHIND A DARK GAS CLOUD.

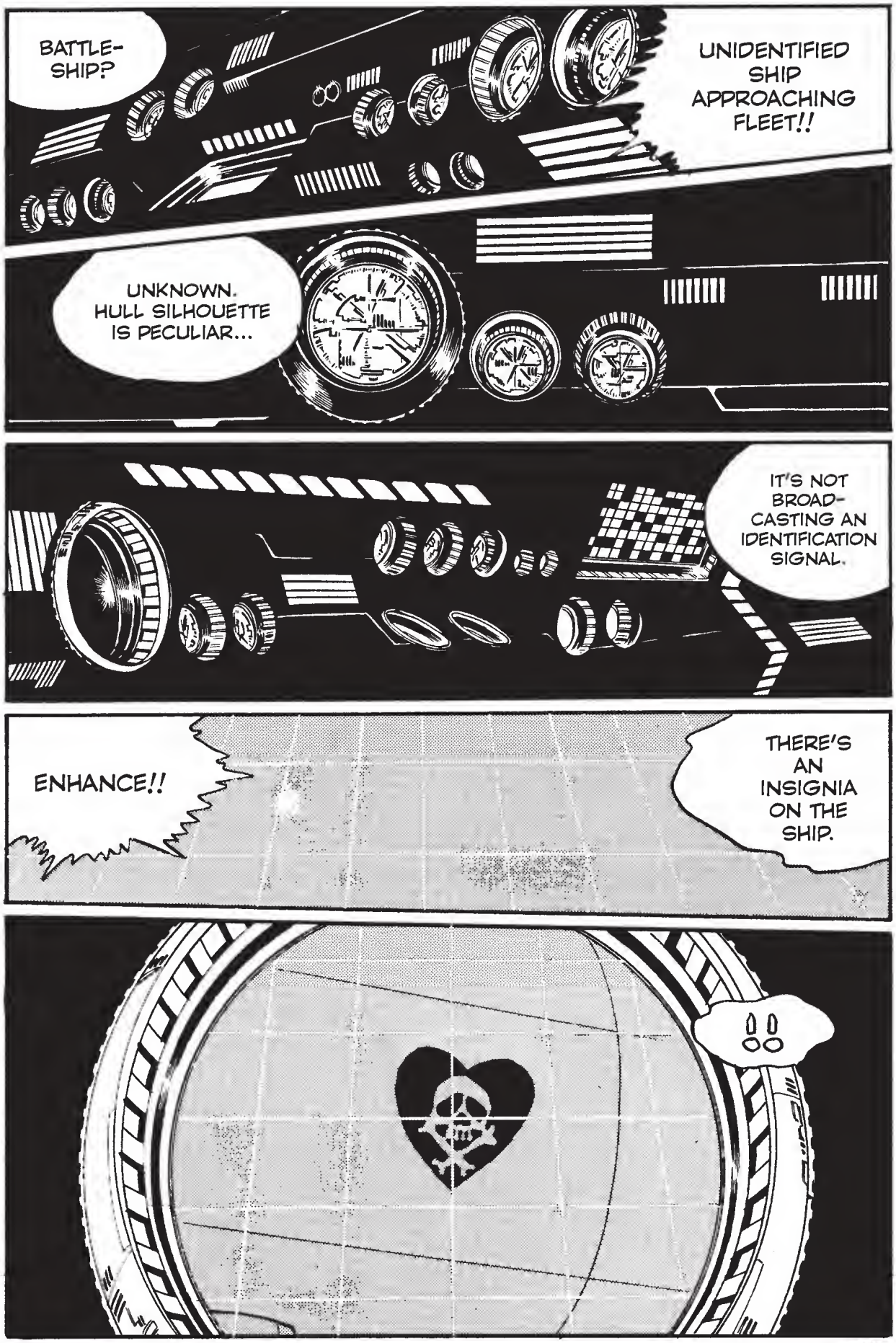

HIROSHI...
YEAH?
??
NO... IT'S NOTHING.
WHIRRRRRRR
...
FARE-WELL.
WHY DO YOU WANDER THE UNIVERSE?
WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR, EMERALDAS?
SPUTTER
SPUTTER
TEK
TEK
TEK

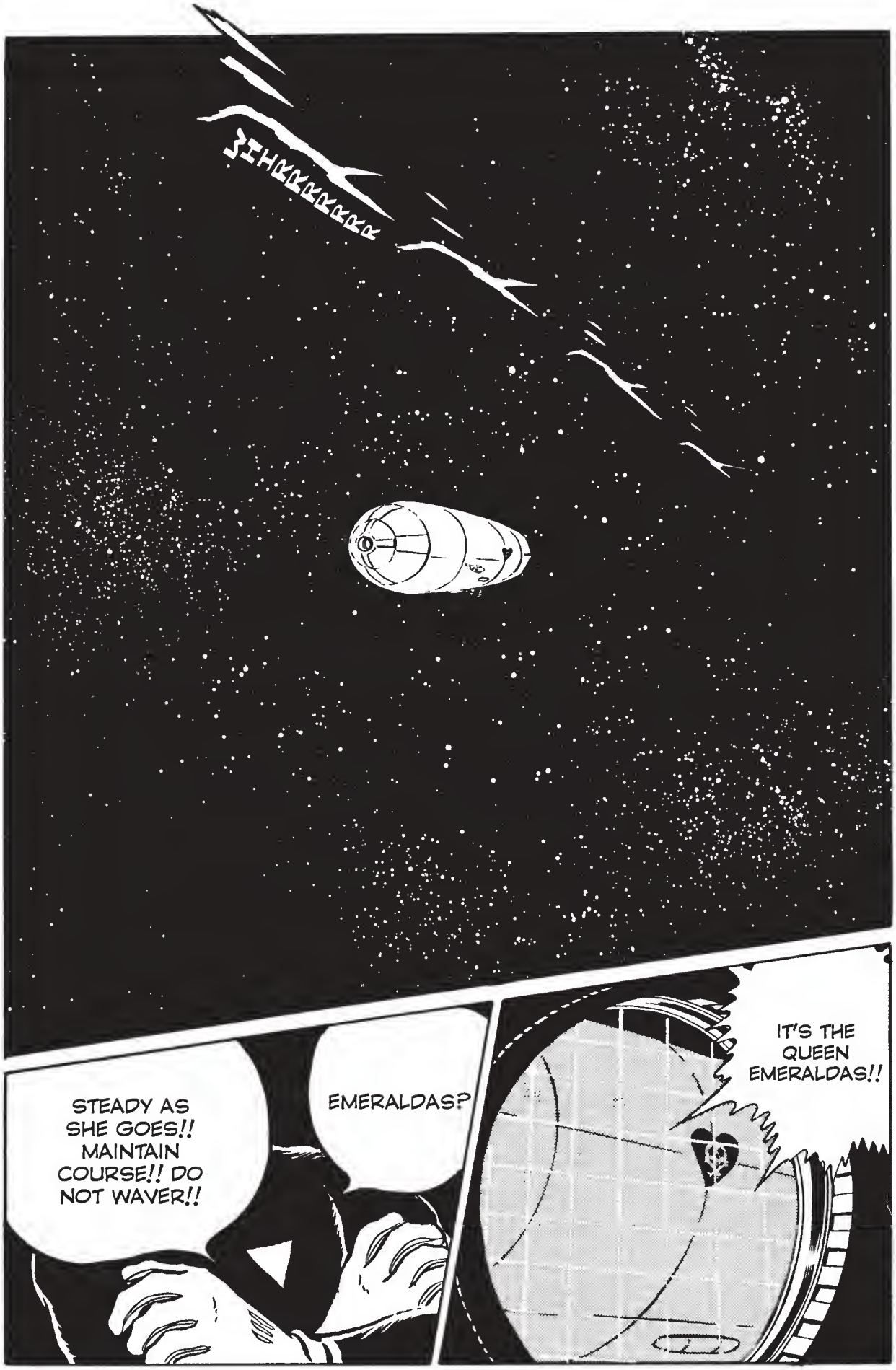

TEK
TEK
TEK
TEK
CRAP!! I GOTTA WORRY ABOUT MYSELF FIRST, AND GET THIS JUNK HEAP TO RESPOND!!
SHEEERRRRNN
STUB-BORN CHILD...
AND YET HE STILL RESISTS HELP...
SO VERY MUCH... LIKE THE MAN I SEEK...
ZZZZZOOOONNN
WAAAHH. NO GOOD! LOST CONTROL!!

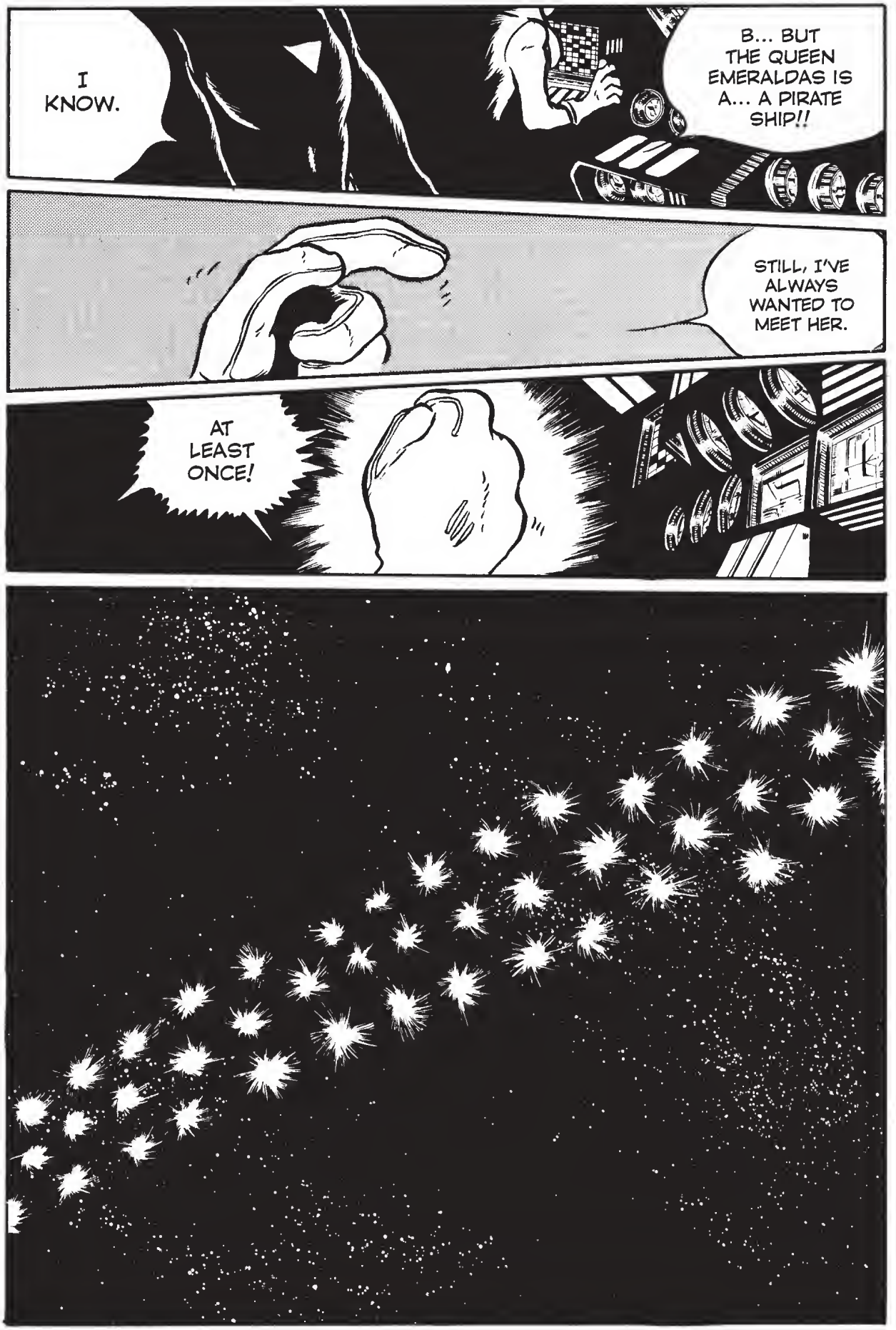

WHY? WHAT DO YOU TRAVEL? WHAT DO YOU SEEK ACROSS THE SEA OF STARS?
EVERYONE I MEET... ALWAYS THE SAME QUESTION...
BUT I WILL NOT ANSWER.
I WANT TO KEEP IT LOCKED AWAY... INSIDE MY SOUL...
TELL HIM THE TALE OF MY HEART...
HOWEVER... I FEEL... SOMEDAY I MUST TELL HIROSHI UMINO...


A DARK AND MELANCHOLY TALE...
AND WHEN I AM DONE...
I WILL KILL HIROSHI UMINO!!
I WILL HAVE TO KILL HIM...
...
WHIRRRRRRR


THE SHEER SCALE... I'VE NEVER SEEN A FLEET THAT MASSIVE...
WHO COULD LEAD SUCH A GATHERING...?
SUCH A MAN MUST KNOW SOMETHING...
SOME THINGS...


BATTLE-SHIP?
UNIDENTIFIED SHIP APPROACHING FLEET!!
UNKNOWN. HULL SILHOUETTE IS PECULIAR...
IT'S NOT BROAD-CASTING AN IDENTIFICATION SIGNAL.
ENHANCE!!
THERE'S AN INSIGNIA ON THE SHIP.
O O
OO

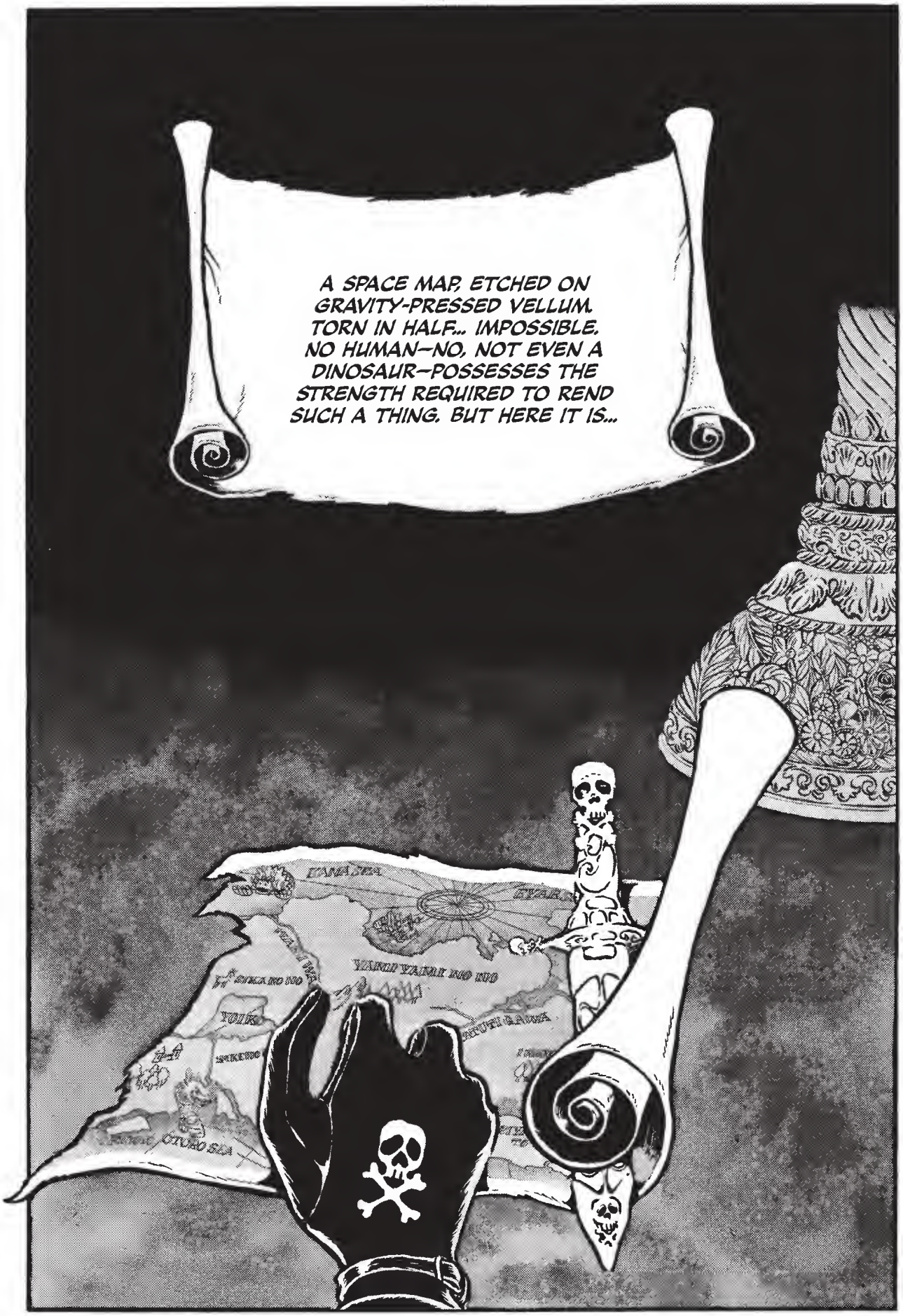

ZIHKKKKKKK
STEADY AS SHE GOES!! MAINTAIN COURSE!! DO NOT WAVER!!
EMERALDAS?
IT'S THE QUEEN EMERALDAS!!


I KNOW.
B... BUT THE QUEEN EMERALDAS IS A... A PIRATE SHIP!!
STILL, I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO MEET HER.
AT LEAST ONCE!

QUEEN EMERALDAS

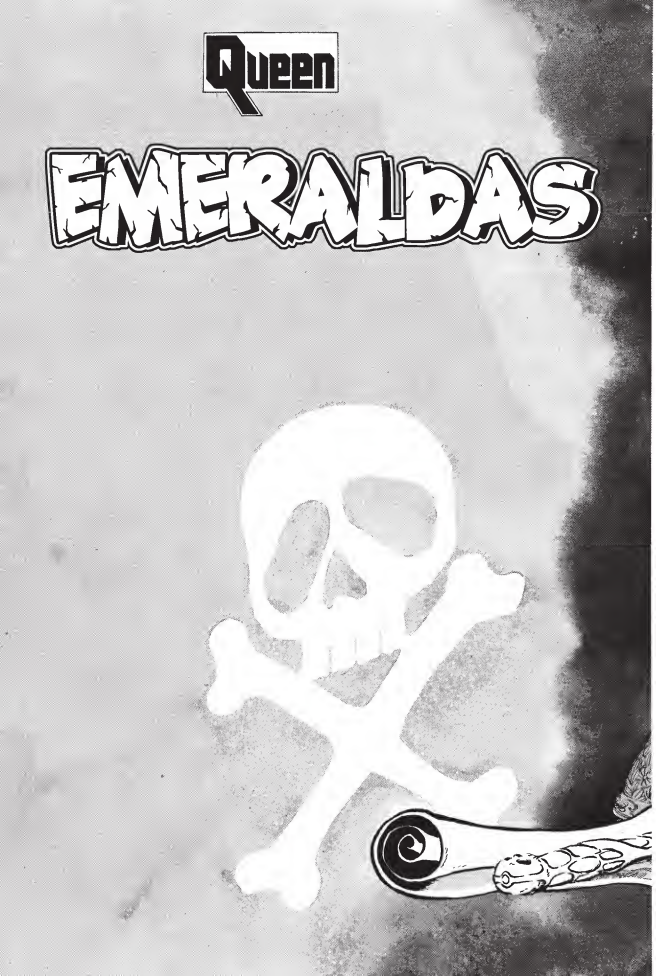
SPECIAL SHORT STORIES

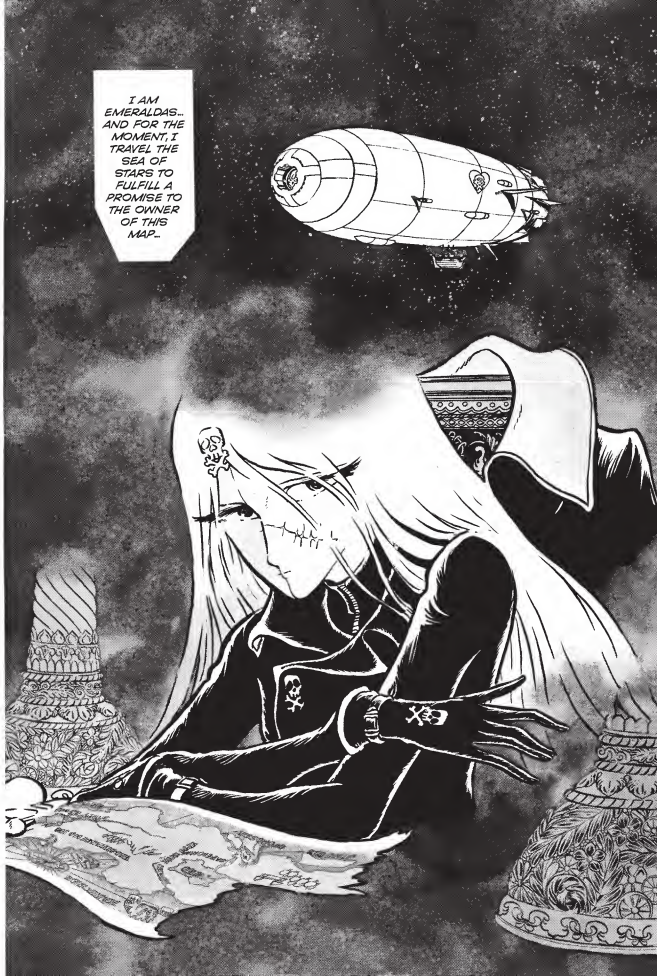
QUEEN EMERALDAS

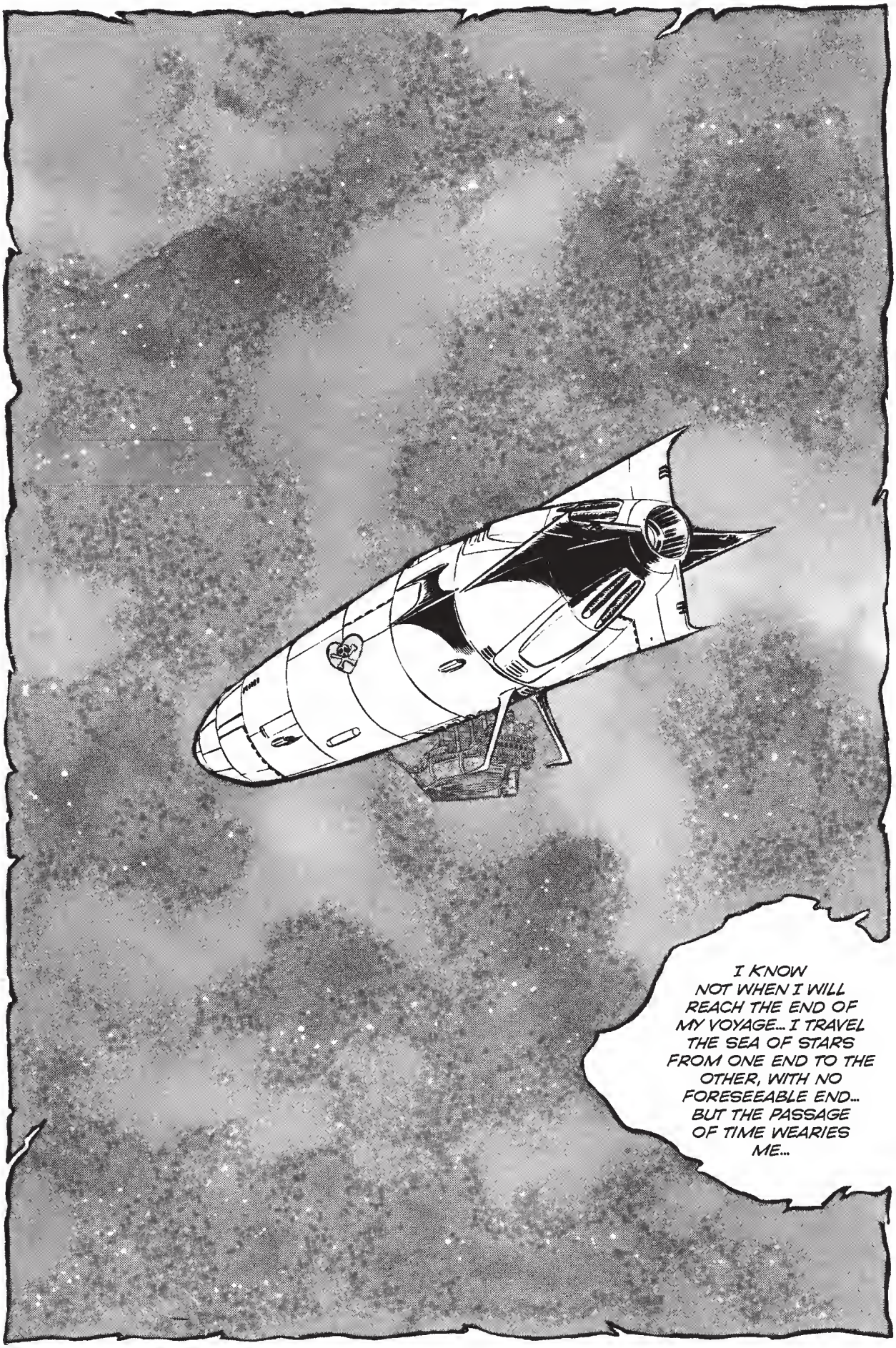

A SPACE MAP, ETCHED ON GRAVITY-PRESSED VELLUM. TORN IN HALF... IMPOSSIBLE. NO HUMAN—NO, NOT EVEN A DINOSAUR—POSSESSES THE STRENGTH REQUIRED TO REND SUCH A THING. BUT HERE IT IS...

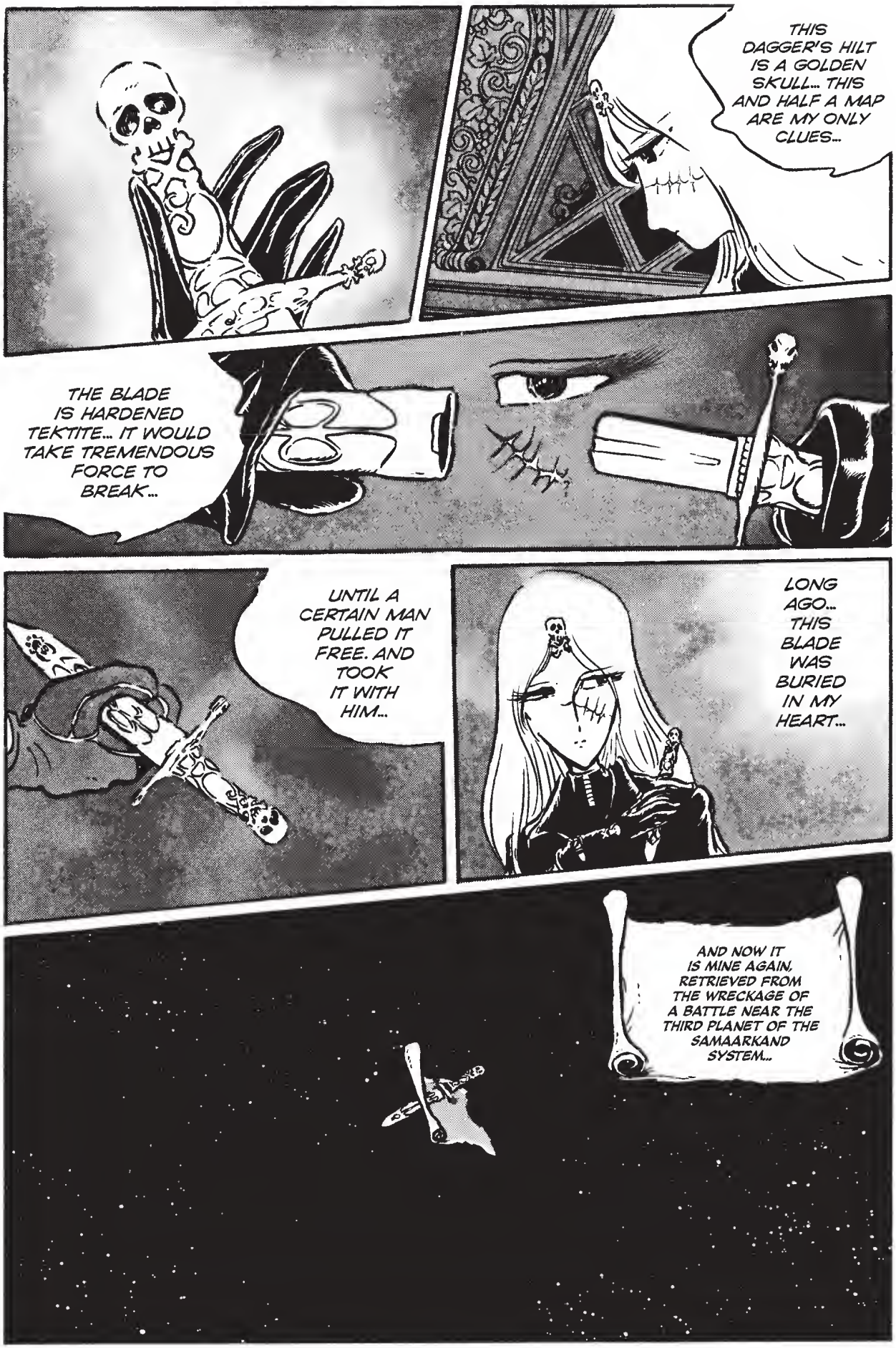
Queen

EMERALDAS

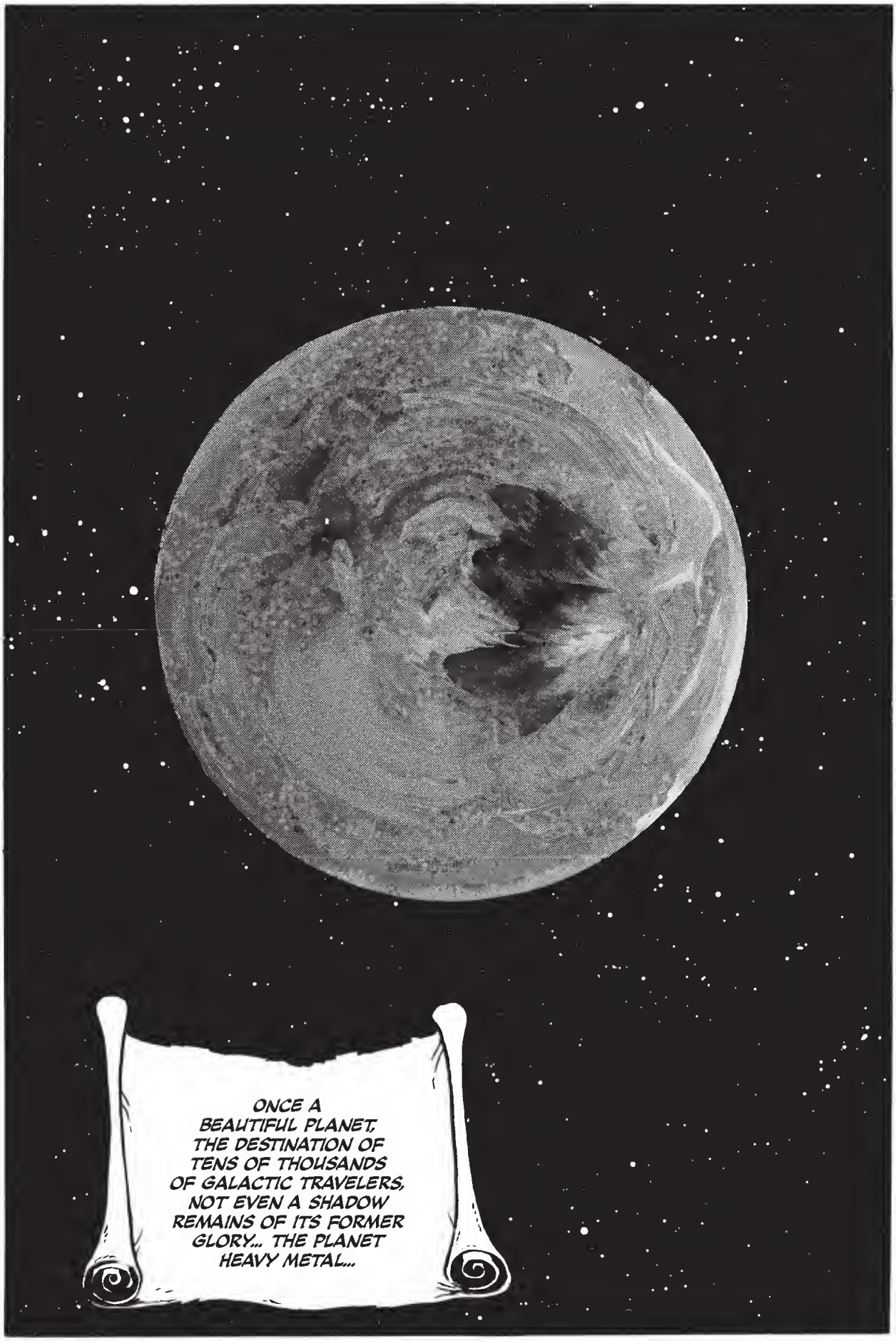


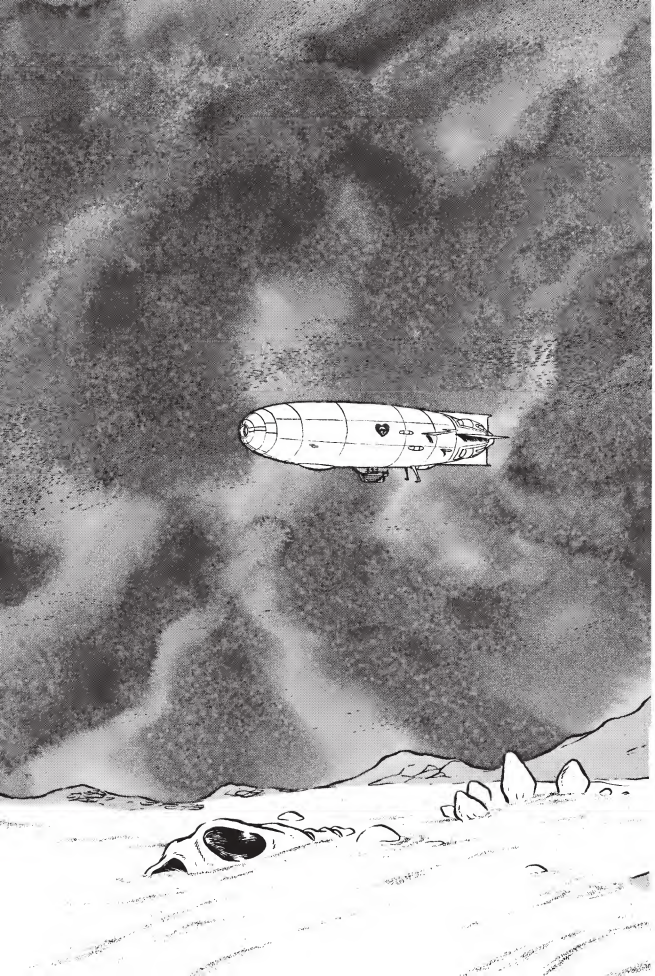


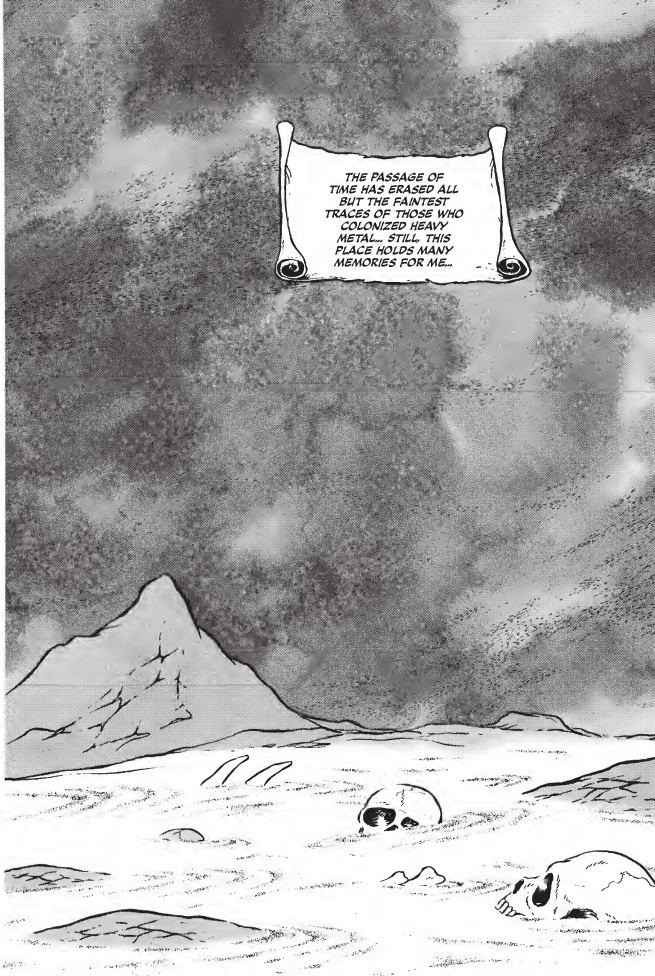

I KNOW NOT WHEN I WILL REACH THE END OF MY VOYAGE... I TRAVEL THE SEA OF STARS FROM ONE END TO THE OTHER, WITH NO FORESEEABLE END... BUT THE PASSAGE OF TIME WEARIES ME...

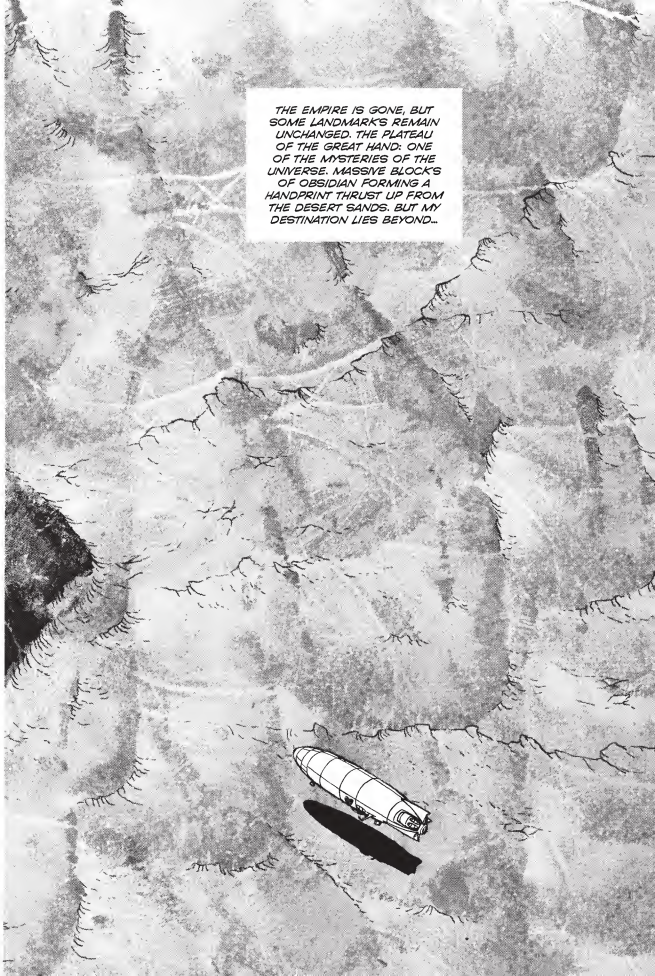

THIS DAGGER'S HILT IS A GOLDEN SKULL... THIS AND HALF A MAP ARE MY ONLY CLUES...
THE BLADE IS HARDENED TEKTITE... IT WOULD TAKE TREMENDOUS FORCE TO BREAK...
UNTIL A CERTAIN MAN PULLED IT FREE. AND TOOK IT WITH HIM...
LONG AGO... THIS BLADE WAS BURIED IN MY HEART...
AND NOW IT IS MINE AGAIN, RETRIEVED FROM THE WRECKAGE OF A BATTLE NEAR THE THIRD PLANET OF THE SAMAARKAND SYSTEM...

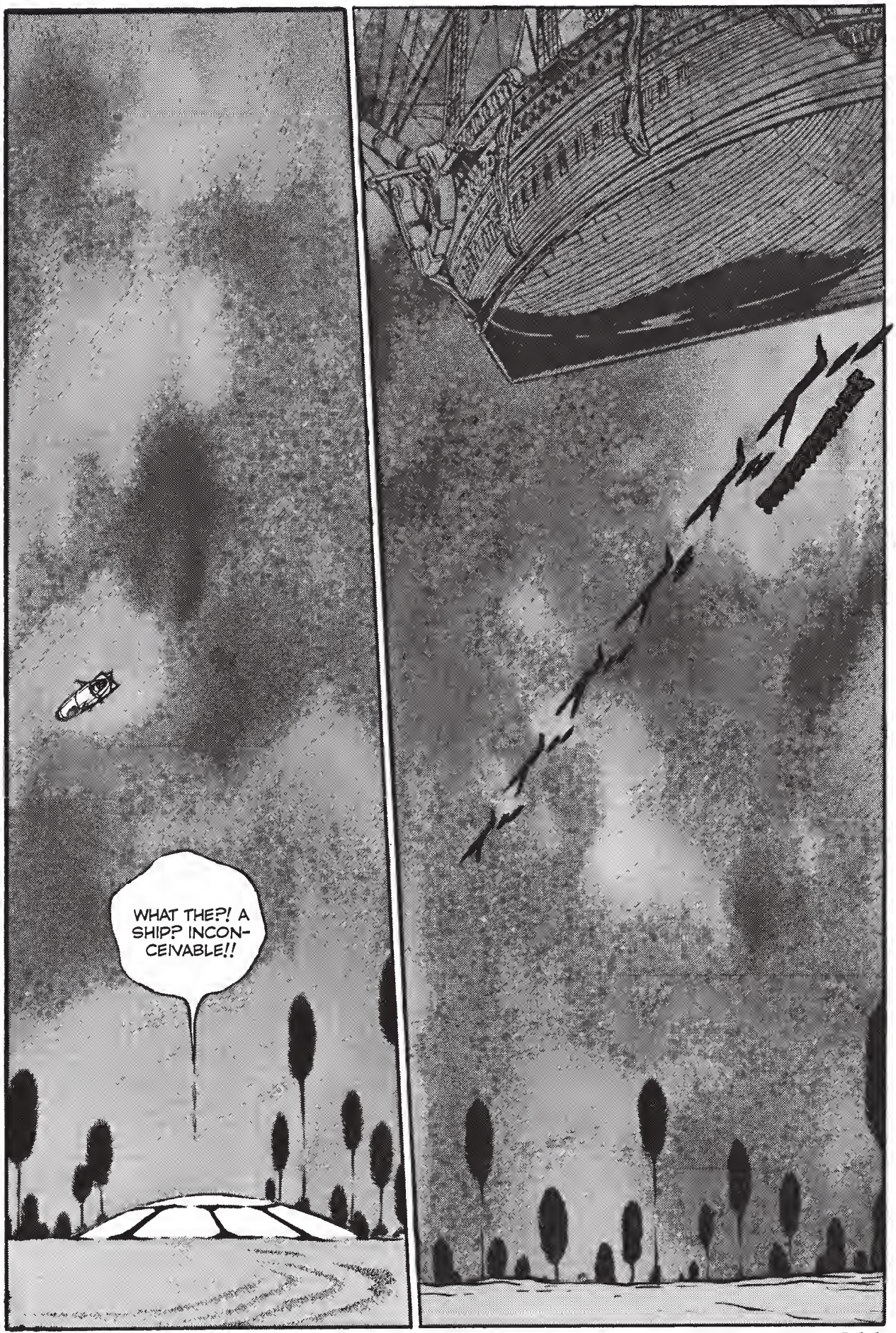
MY HEART IS HEAVY... AND SO I TURN MY PATH TOWARDS THE PLANET HEAVY METAL... A PLACE THAT REMEMBERS THE MAN WHOSE HAND HELD THIS DAGGER...
THE PLANET HEAVY METAL... ONCE A JUNCTION FOR THE GALAXY EXPRESS... ONCE AN OUTPOST FOR PIONEERS...
THE QUEEN EMERALDAS AGREES... I THINK SHE WEARIES, TOO...

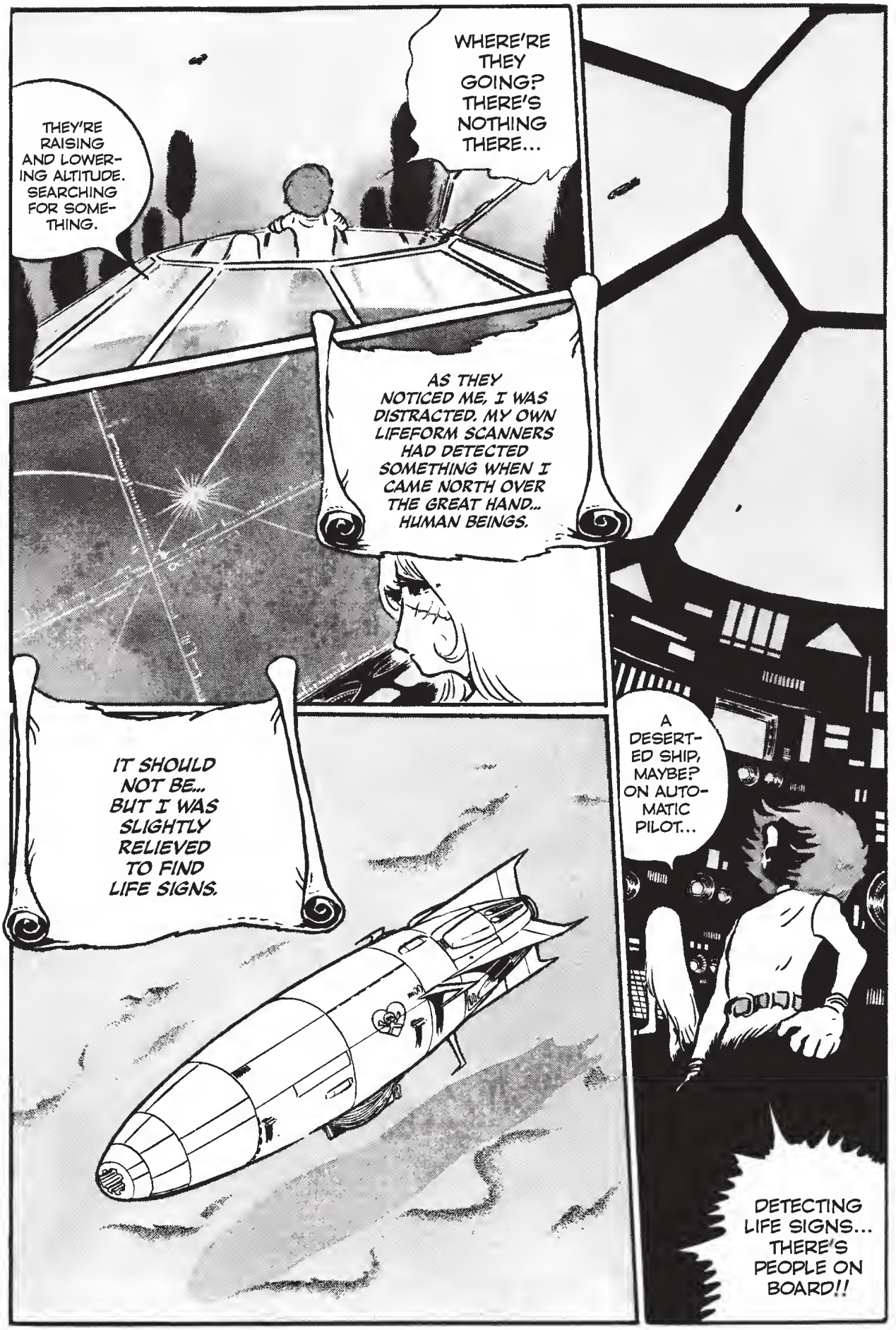

ONCE A BEAUTIFUL PLANET, THE DESTINATION OF TENS OF THOUSANDS OF GALACTIC TRAVELERS, NOT EVEN A SHADOW REMAINS OF ITS FORMER GLORY... THE PLANET HEAVY METAL...

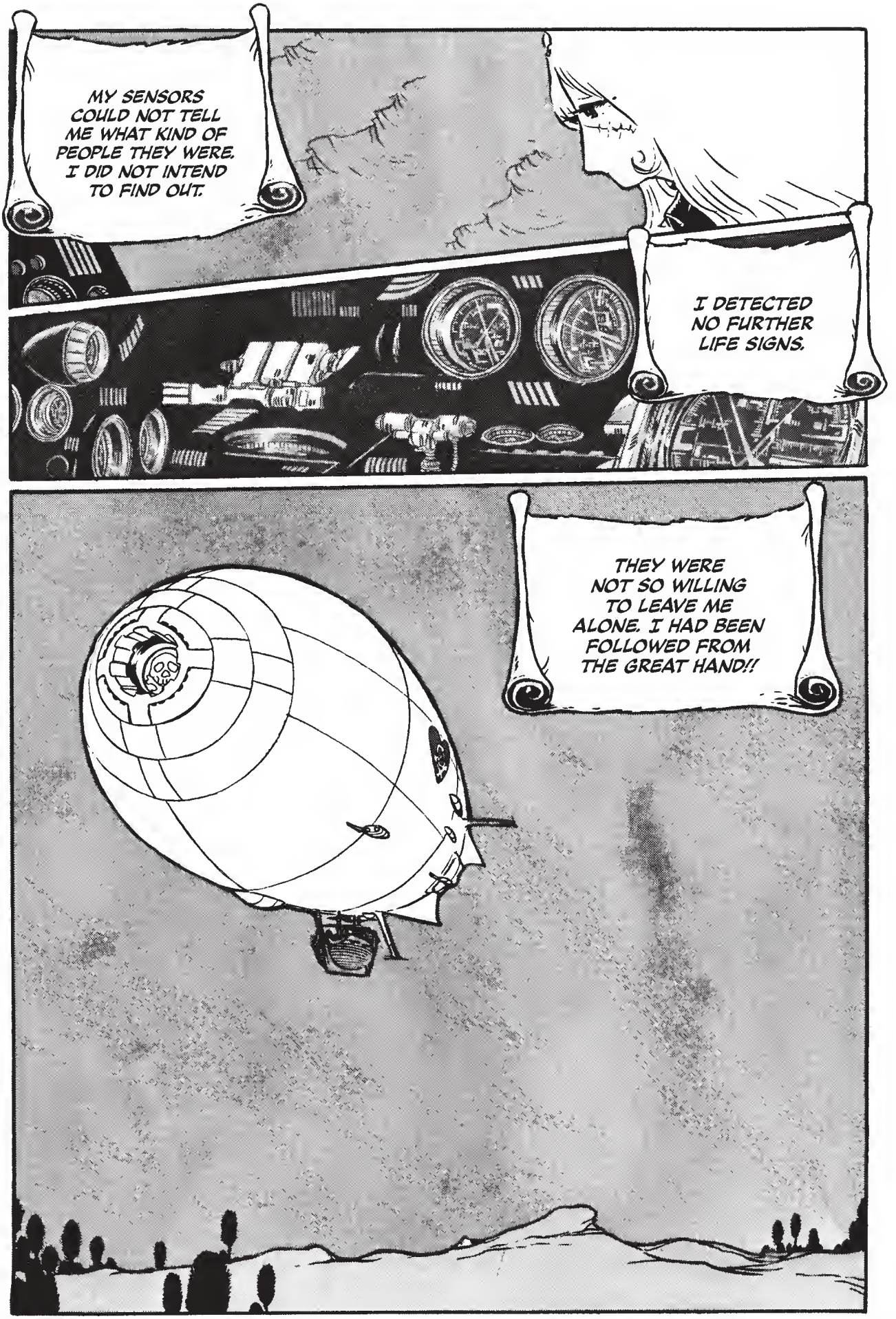


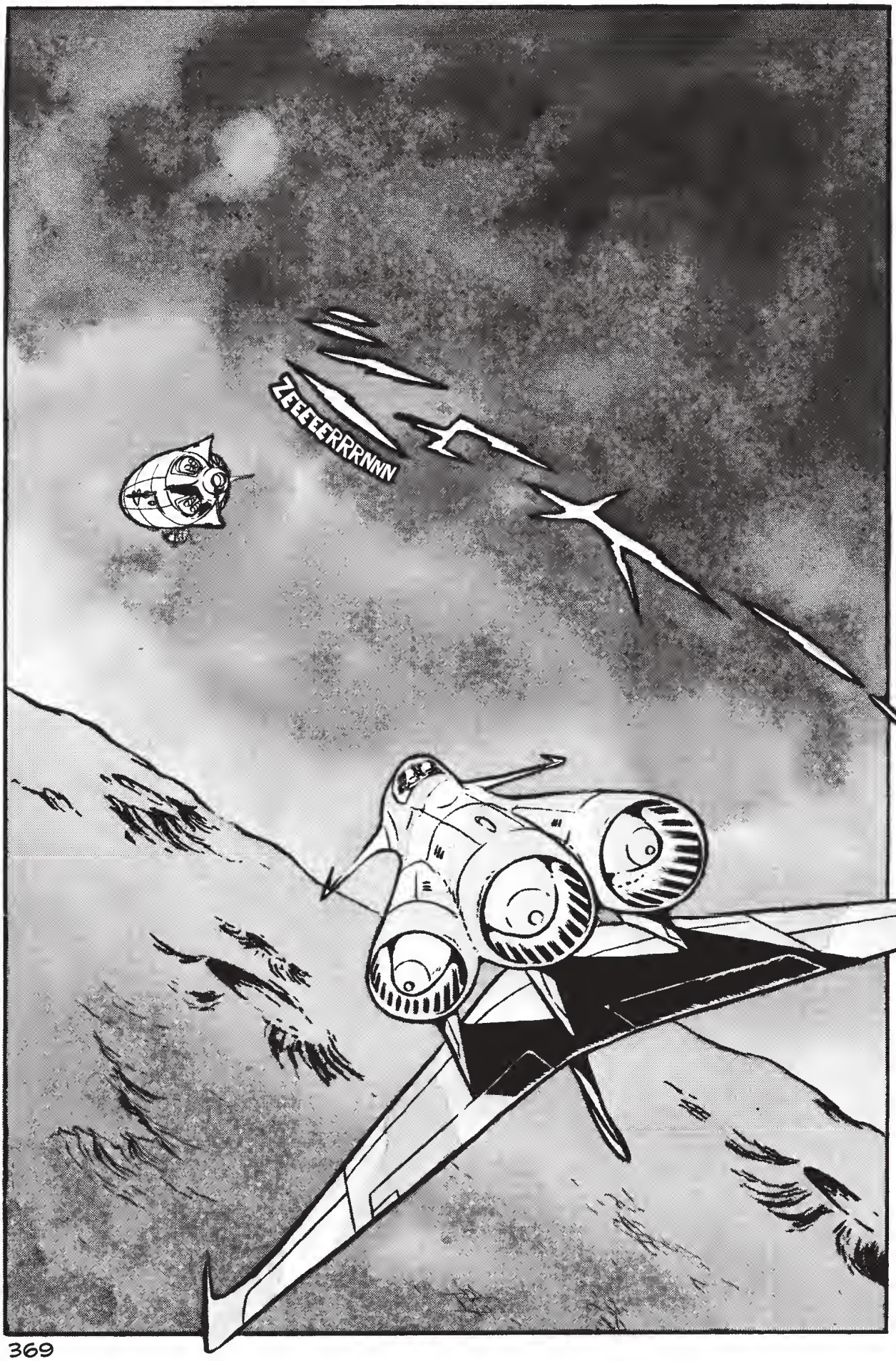

THE PASSAGE OF TIME HAS ERASED ALL BUT THE FAINTEST TRACES OF THOSE WHO COLONIZED HEAVY METAL... STILL, THIS PLACE HOLDS MANY MEMORIES FOR ME...

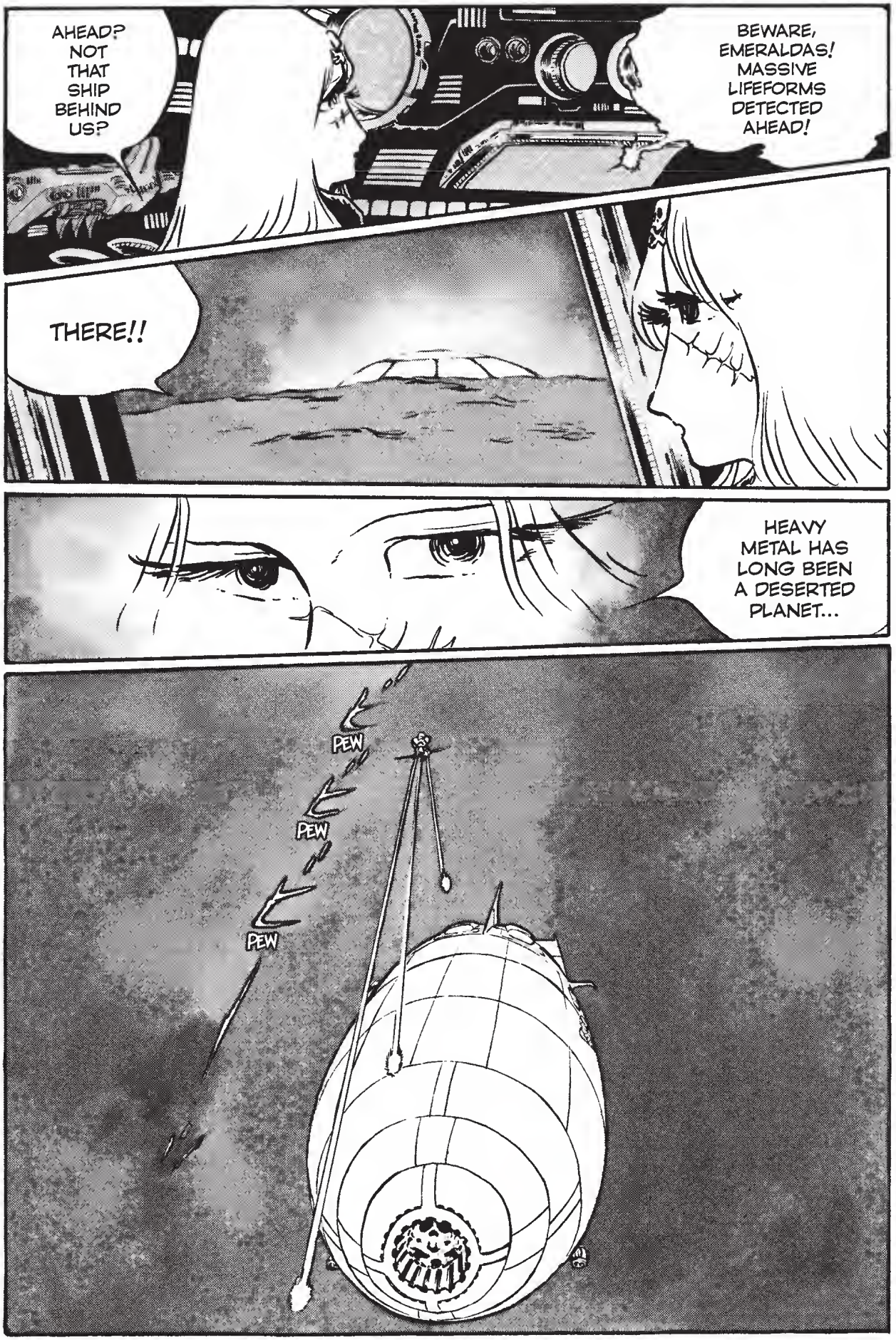

THE EMPIRE IS GONE, BUT SOME LANDMARKS REMAIN UNCHANGED. THE PLATEAU OF THE GREAT HAND: ONE OF THE MYSTERIES OF THE UNIVERSE. MASSIVE BLOCKS OF OBSIDIAN FORMING A HANDPRINT THRUST UP FROM THE DESERT SANDS. BUT MY DESTINATION LIES BEYOND...

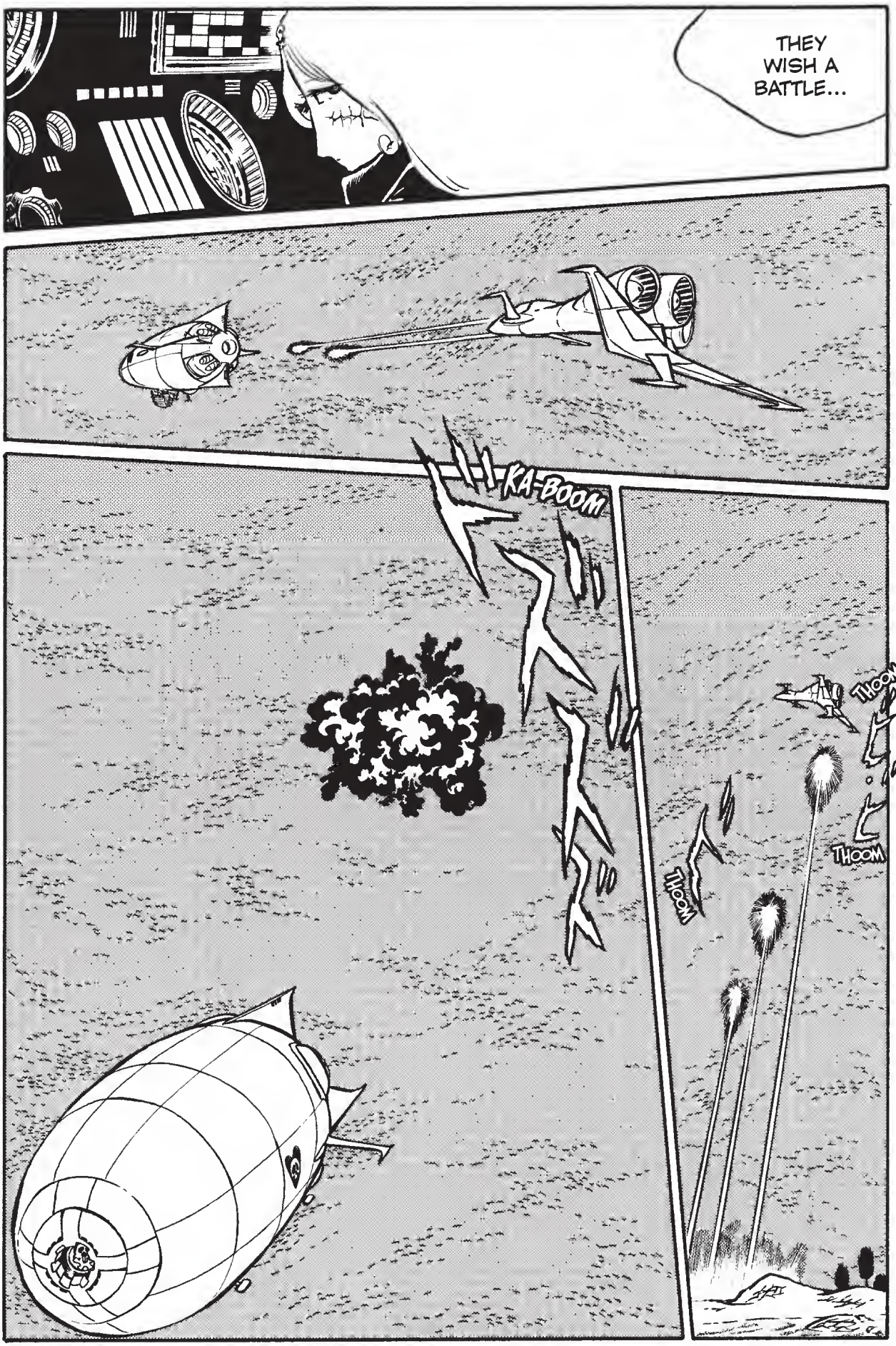

WHAT THE?! A SHIP? INCONCEIVABLE!!

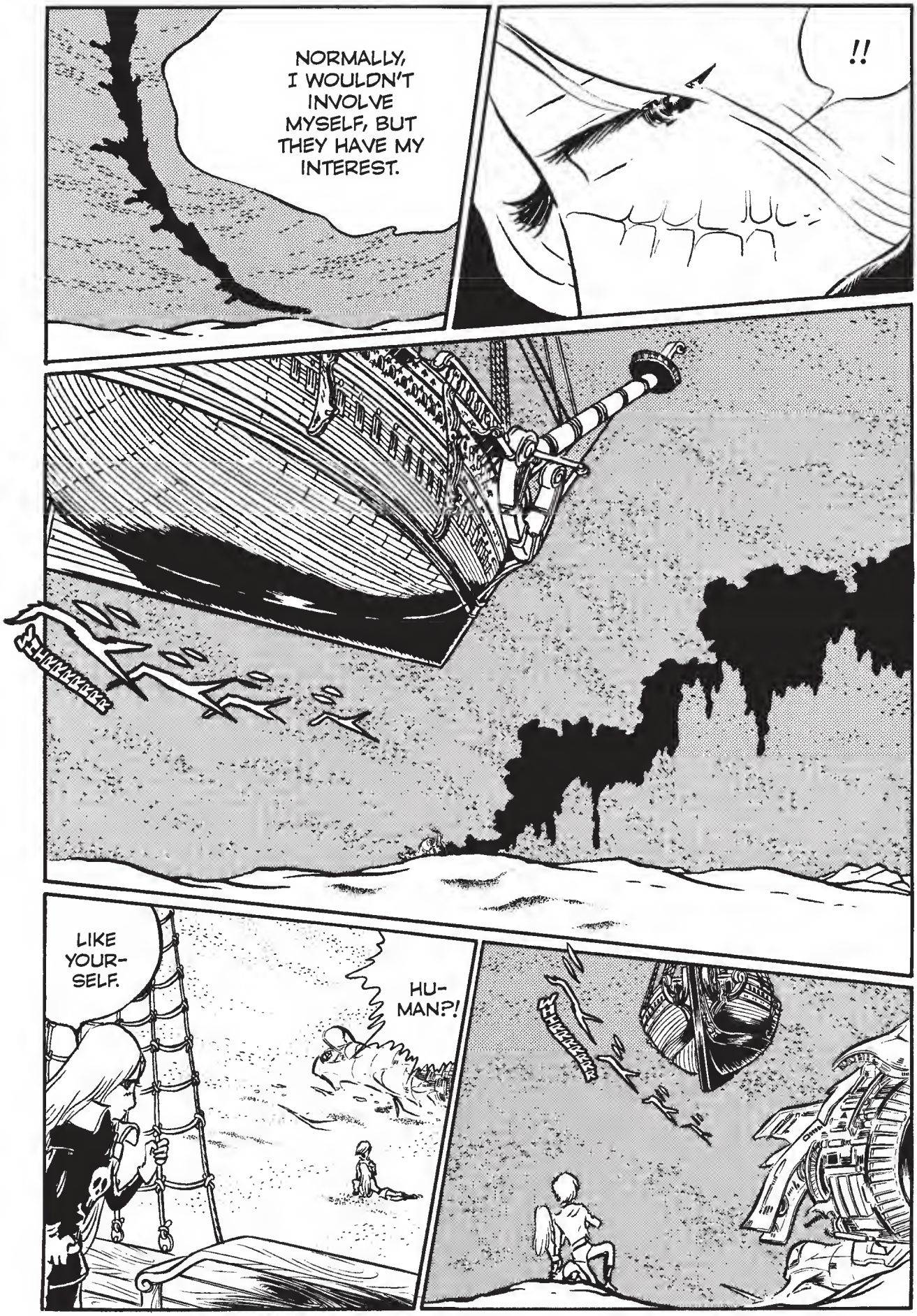

THEY'RE RAISING AND LOWERING ALTITUDE. SEARCHING FOR SOMETHING.
WHERE'RE THEY GOING? THERE'S NOTHING THERE...
AS THEY NOTICED ME, I WAS DISTRACTED. MY OWN LIFEFORM SCANNERS HAD DETECTED SOMETHING WHEN I CAME NORTH OVER THE GREAT HAND... HUMAN BEINGS.
IT SHOULD NOT BE... BUT I WAS SLIGHTLY RELIEVED TO FIND LIFE SIGNS.
A DESERTED SHIP, MAYBE? ON AUTOMATIC PILOT...
DETECTING LIFE SIGNS... THERE'S PEOPLE ON BOARD!!

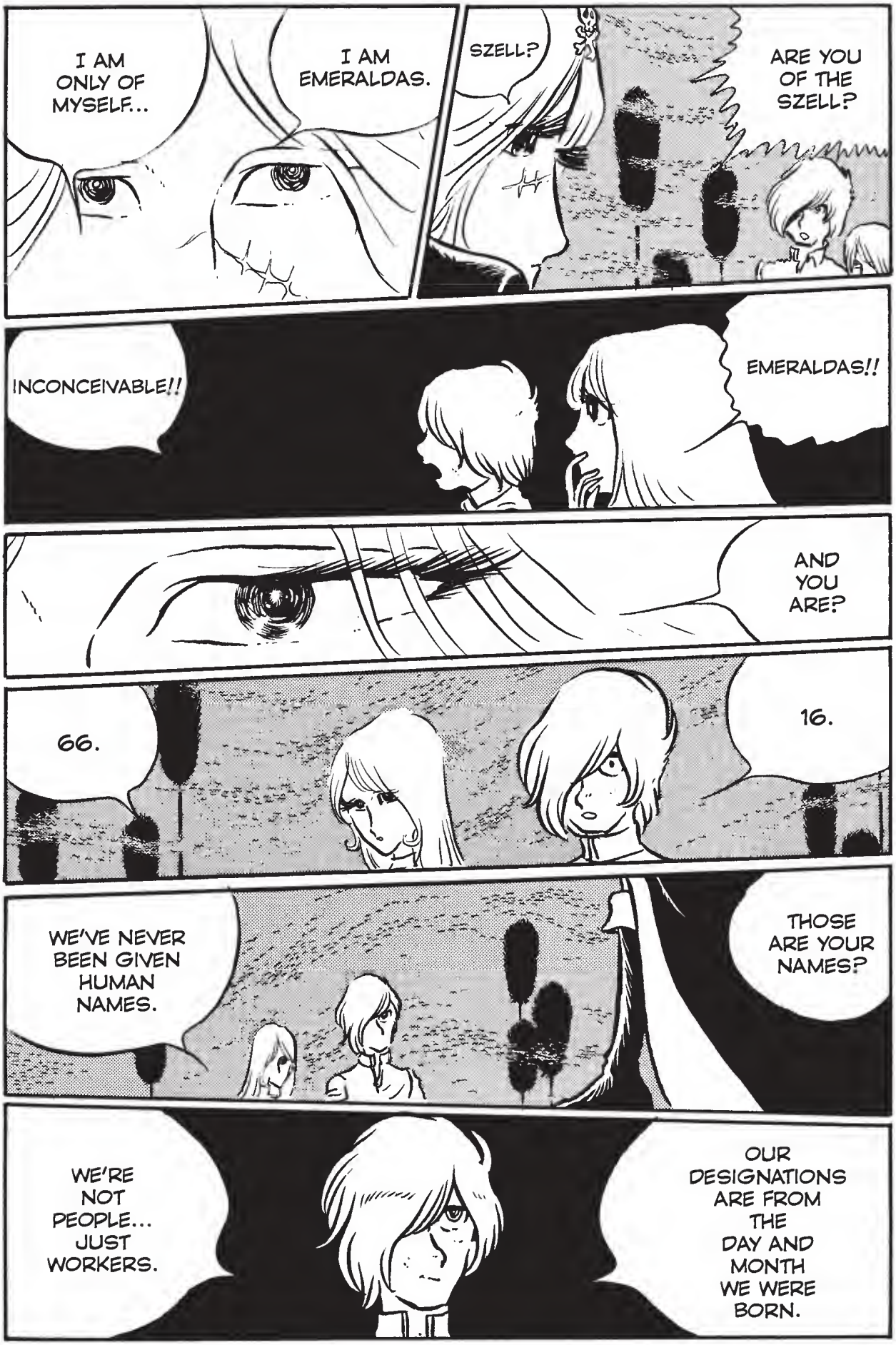

MY SENSORS COULD NOT TELL ME WHAT KIND OF PEOPLE THEY WERE. I DID NOT INTEND TO FIND OUT.
I DETECTED NO FURTHER LIFE SIGNS.
THEY WERE NOT SO WILLING TO LEAVE ME ALONE. I HAD BEEN FOLLOWED FROM THE GREAT HAND!!

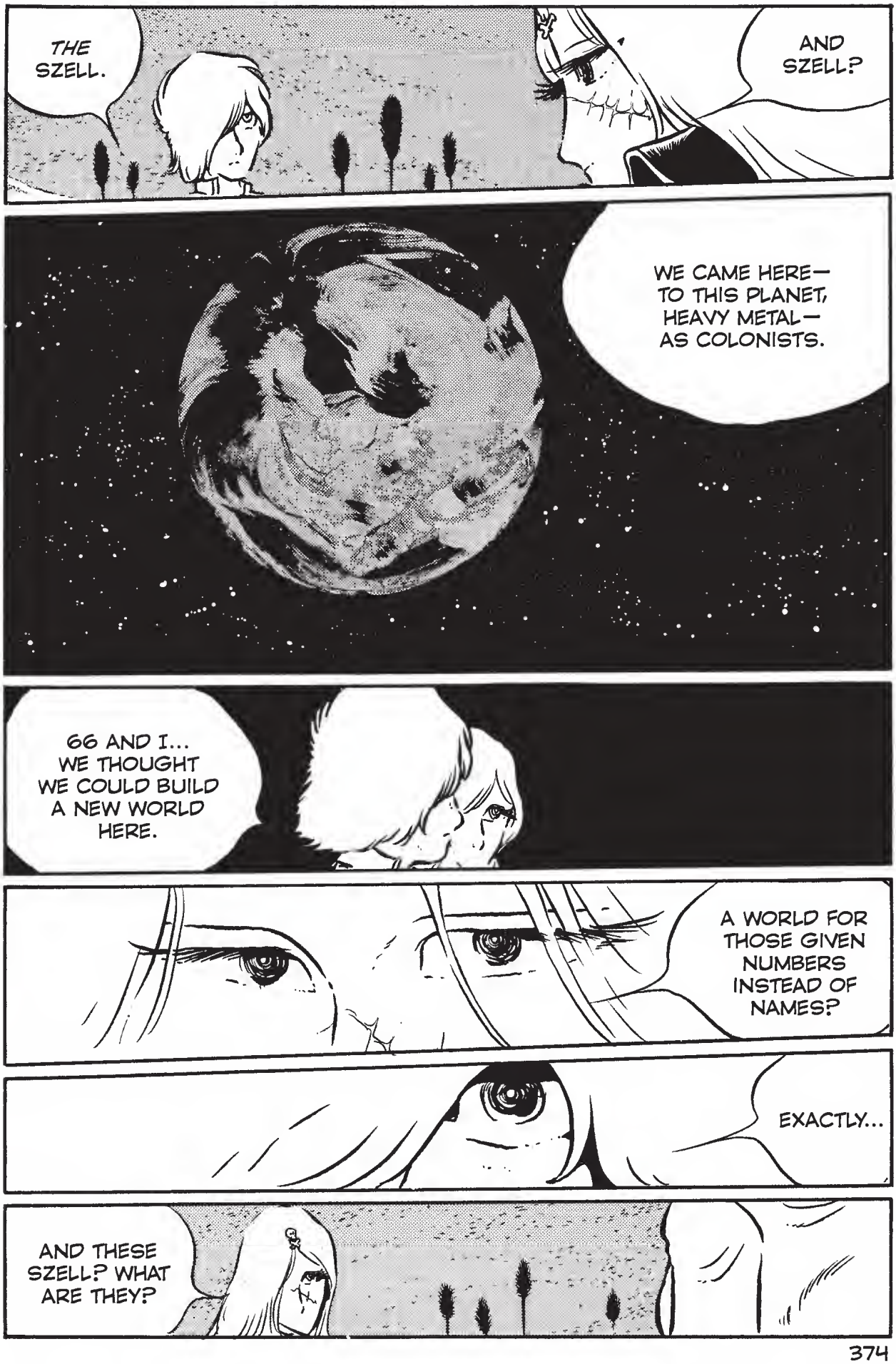

ZEEEEERRRNNN

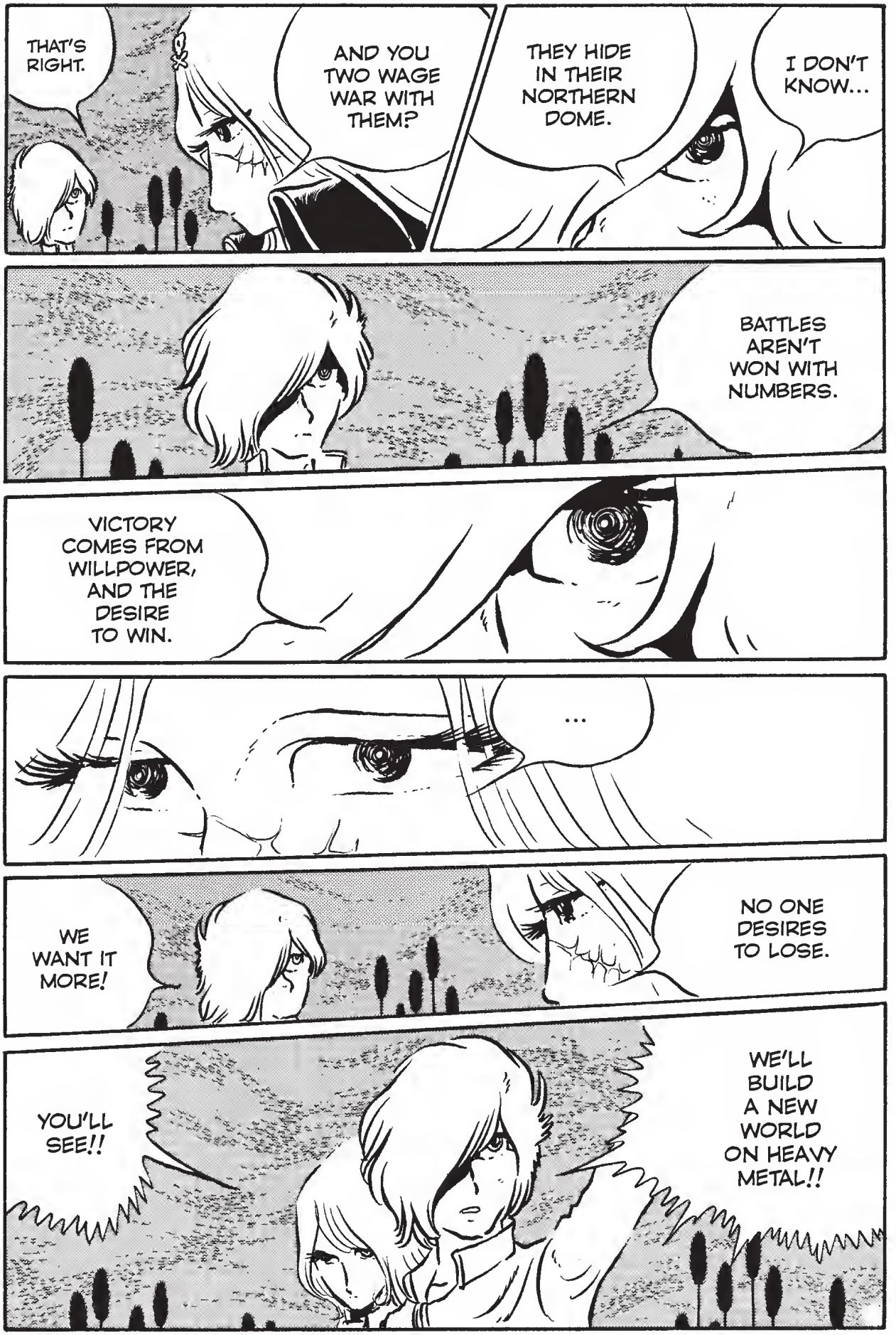

AHEAD? NOT THAT SHIP BEHIND US?
BEWARE, EMERALDAS! MASSIVE LIFEFORMS DETECTED AHEAD!
THERE!!
HEAVY METAL HAS LONG BEEN A DESERTED PLANET...
PEW
PEW
PEW

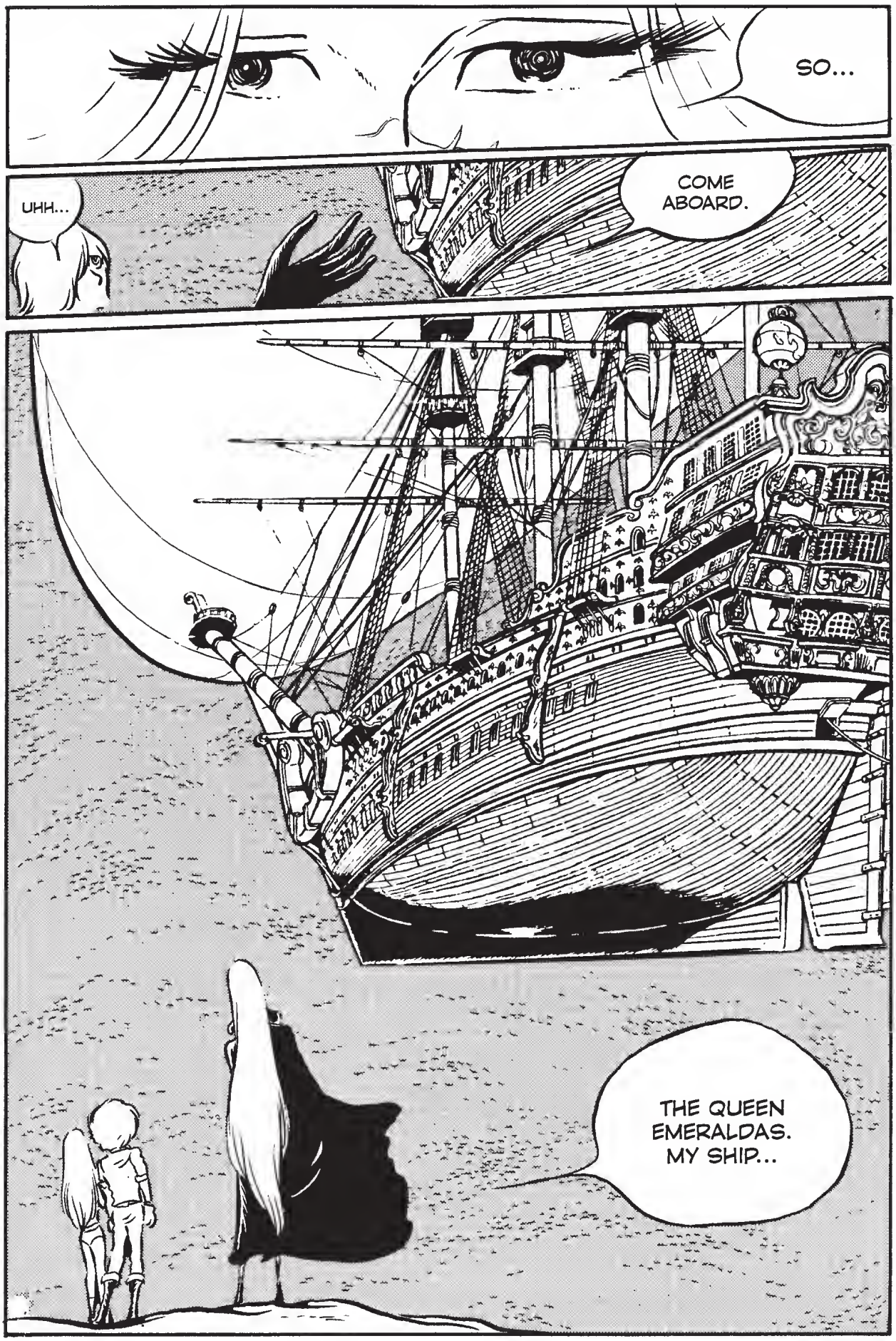

THEY WISH A BATTLE...
KA-BOOM
THOOM
THOOM
THOOM

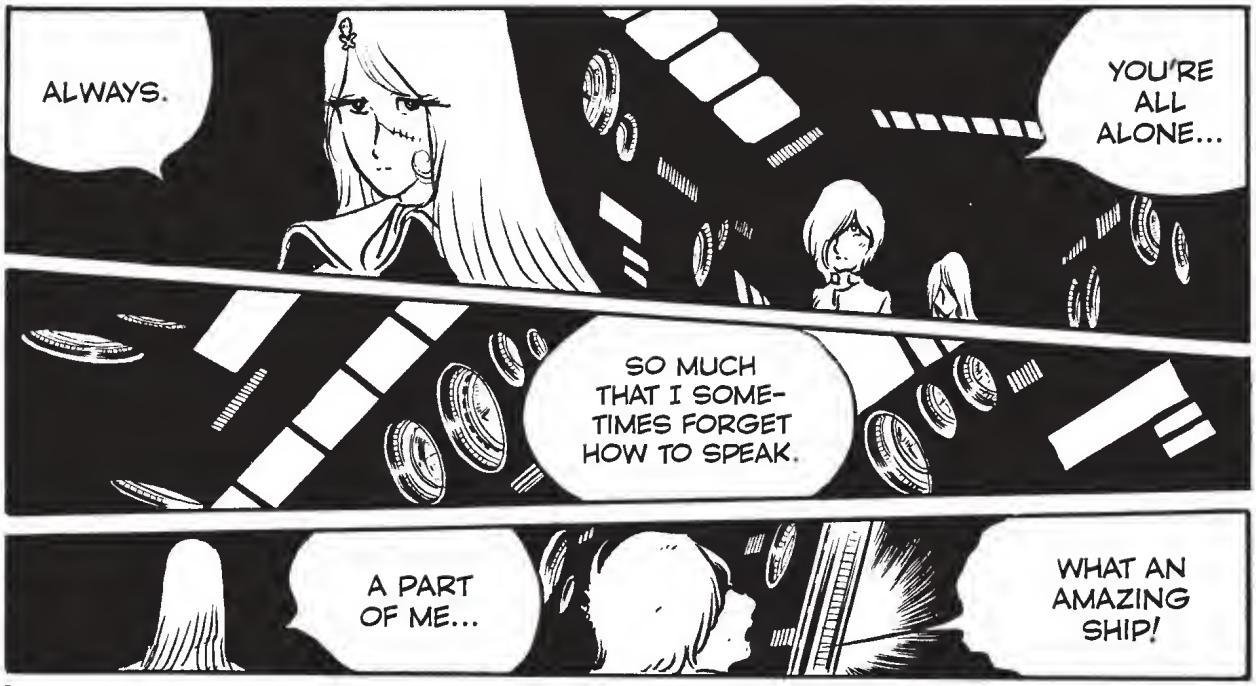

NORMALLY, I WOULDN'T INVOLVE MYSELF, BUT THEY HAVE MY INTEREST.
!!
HHMMMMMH-H-
LIKE YOUR-SELF.
HU-MAN?!
HHMMMMMH-H-

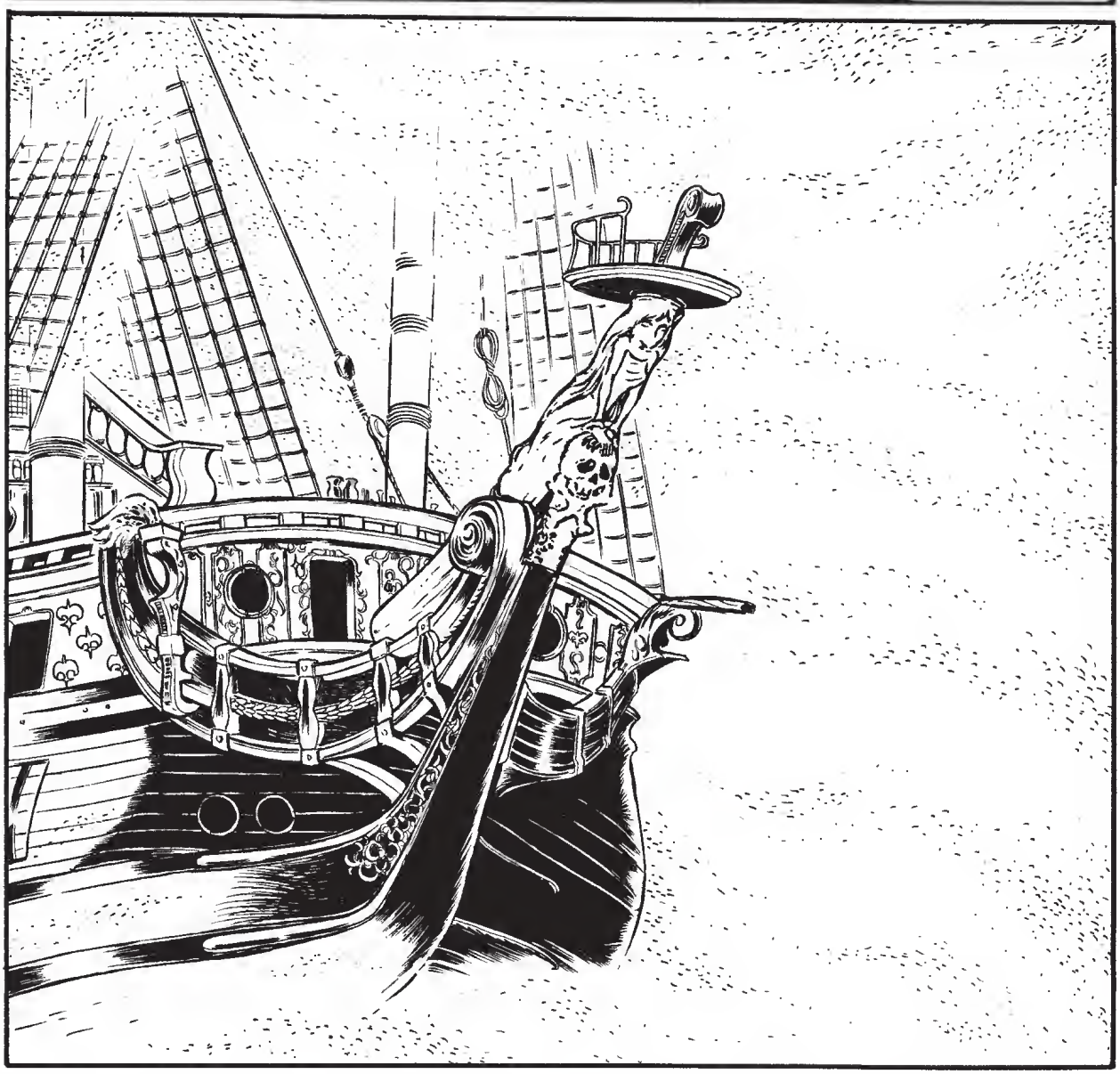

I AM ONLY OF MYSELF...
I AM EMERALDAS.
SZELL?
ARE YOU OF THE SZELL?
!NCONCEIVABLE!!
EMERALDAS!!
AND YOU ARE?
66.
16.
WE'VE NEVER BEEN GIVEN HUMAN NAMES.
THOSE ARE YOUR NAMES?
WE'RE NOT PEOPLE... JUST WORKERS.
OUR DESIGNATIONS ARE FROM THE DAY AND MONTH WE WERE BORN.

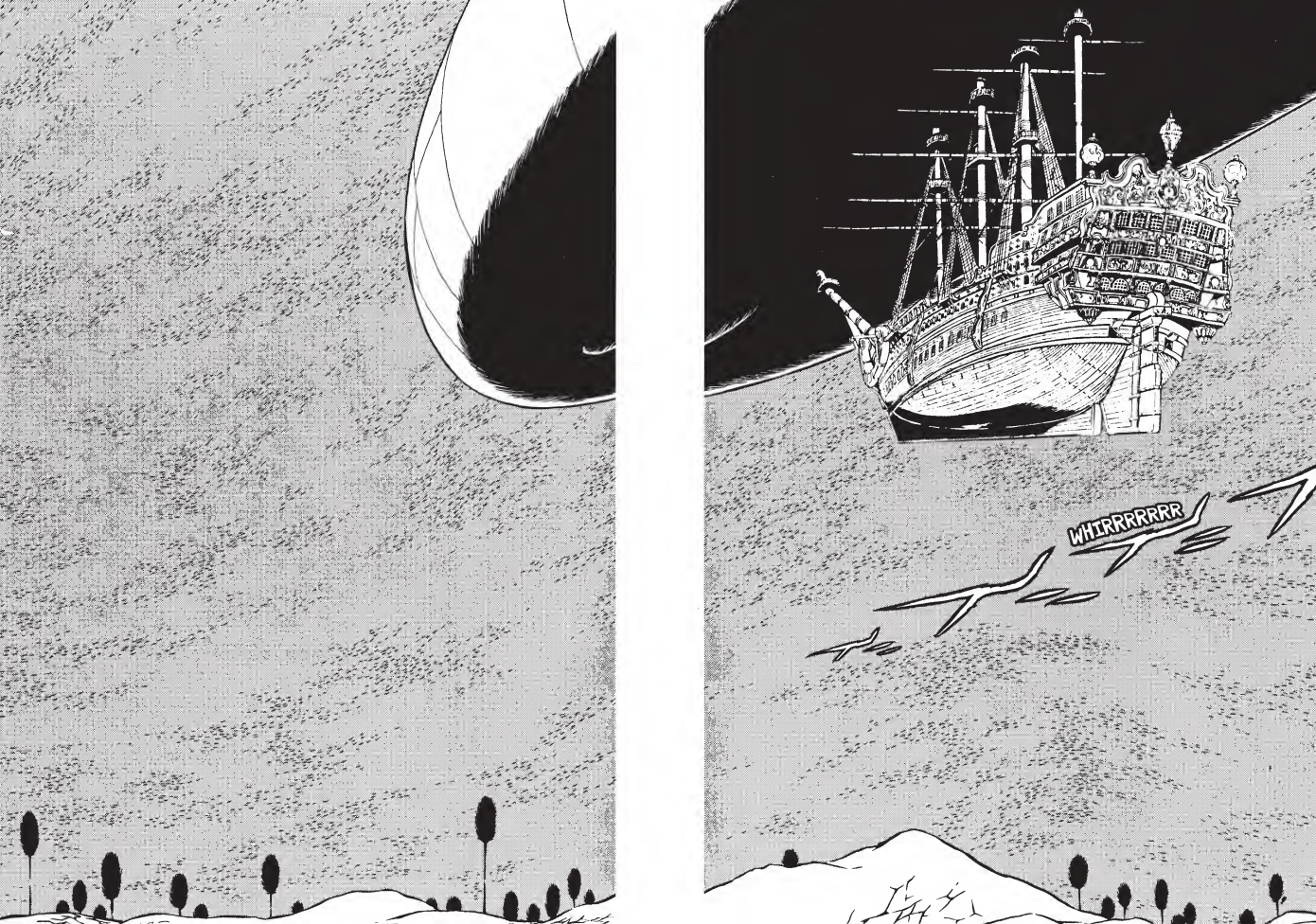

THE SZELL.
AND SZELL?
WE CAME HERE— TO THIS PLANET, HEAVY METAL— AS COLONISTS.
66 AND I... WE THOUGHT WE COULD BUILD A NEW WORLD HERE.
A WORLD FOR THOSE GIVEN NUMBERS INSTEAD OF NAMES?
EXACTLY...
AND THESE SZELL? WHAT ARE THEY?

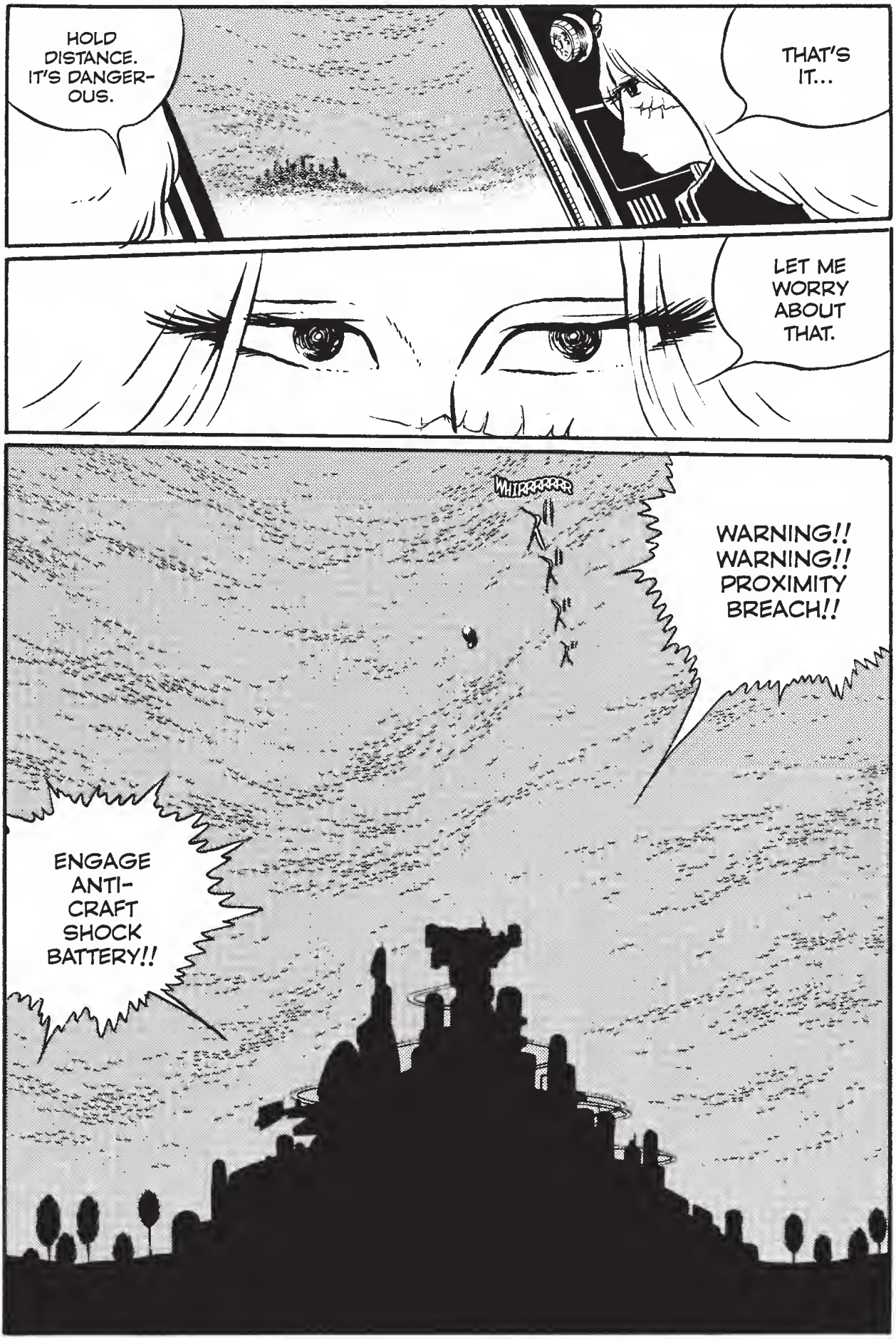

THAT'S RIGHT.
AND YOU TWO WAGE WAR WITH THEM?
THEY HIDE IN THEIR NORTHERN DOME.
I DON'T KNOW...
BATTLES AREN'T WON WITH NUMBERS.
VICTORY COMES FROM WILLPOWER, AND THE DESIRE TO WIN.
...
WE WANT IT MORE!
NO ONE DESIRES TO LOSE.
YOU'LL SEE!!
WE'LL BUILD A NEW WORLD ON HEAVY METAL!!

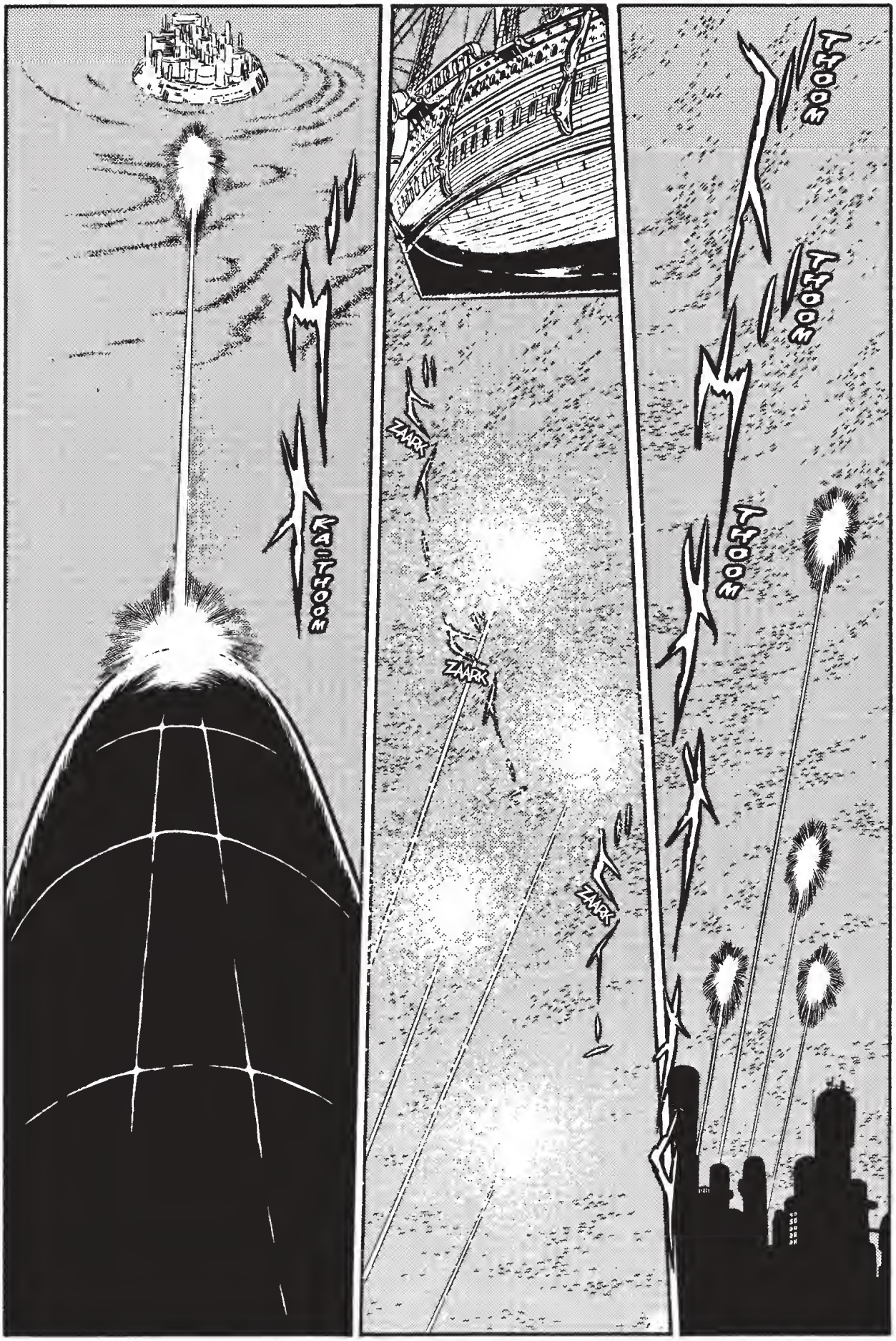

SO...
COME ABOARD.
UHH...
THE QUEEN EMERALDAS. MY SHIP...

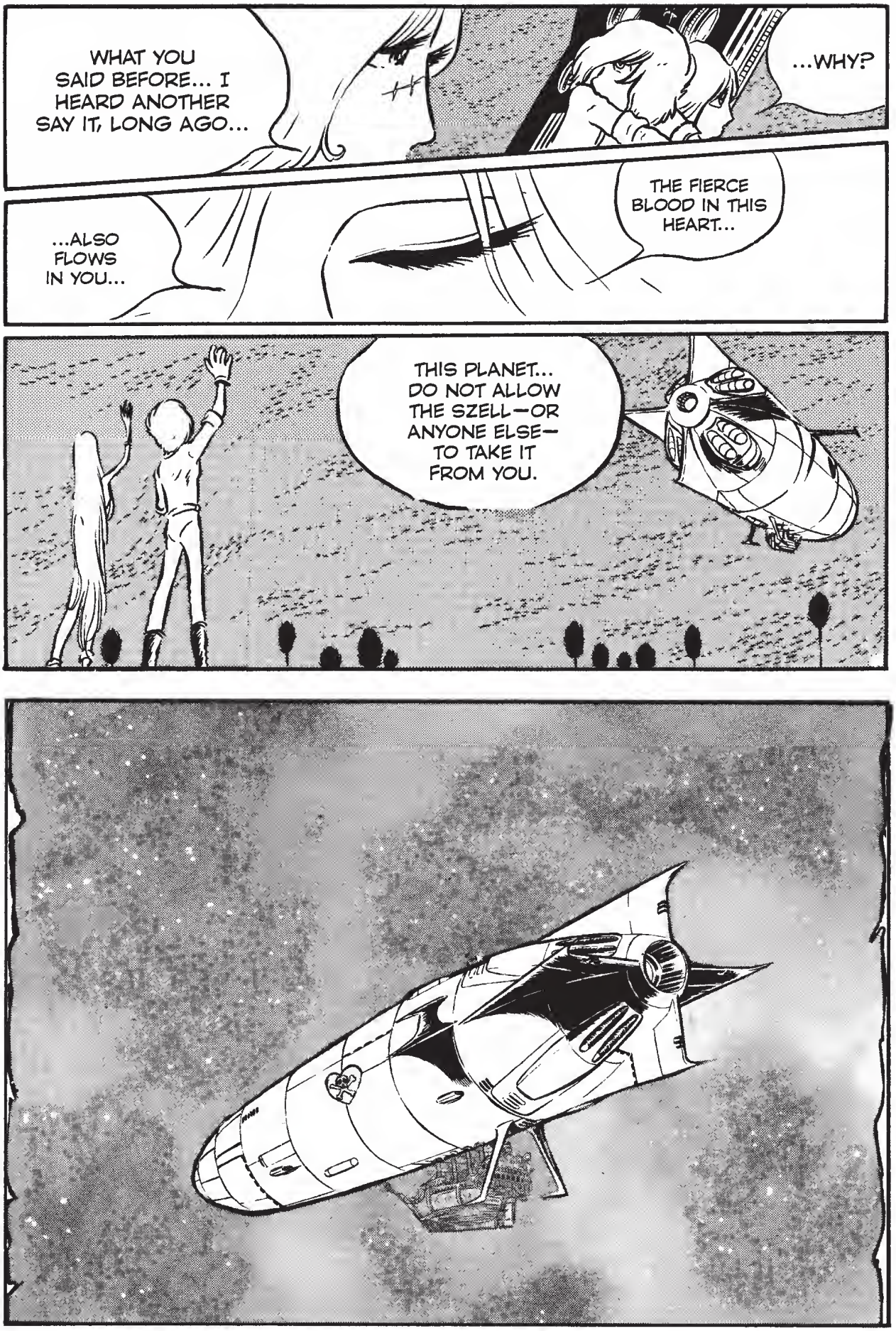

ALWAYS.
YOU'RE ALL ALONE...
SO MUCH THAT I SOMETIMES FORGET HOW TO SPEAK.
A PART OF ME...
WHAT AN AMAZING SHIP!



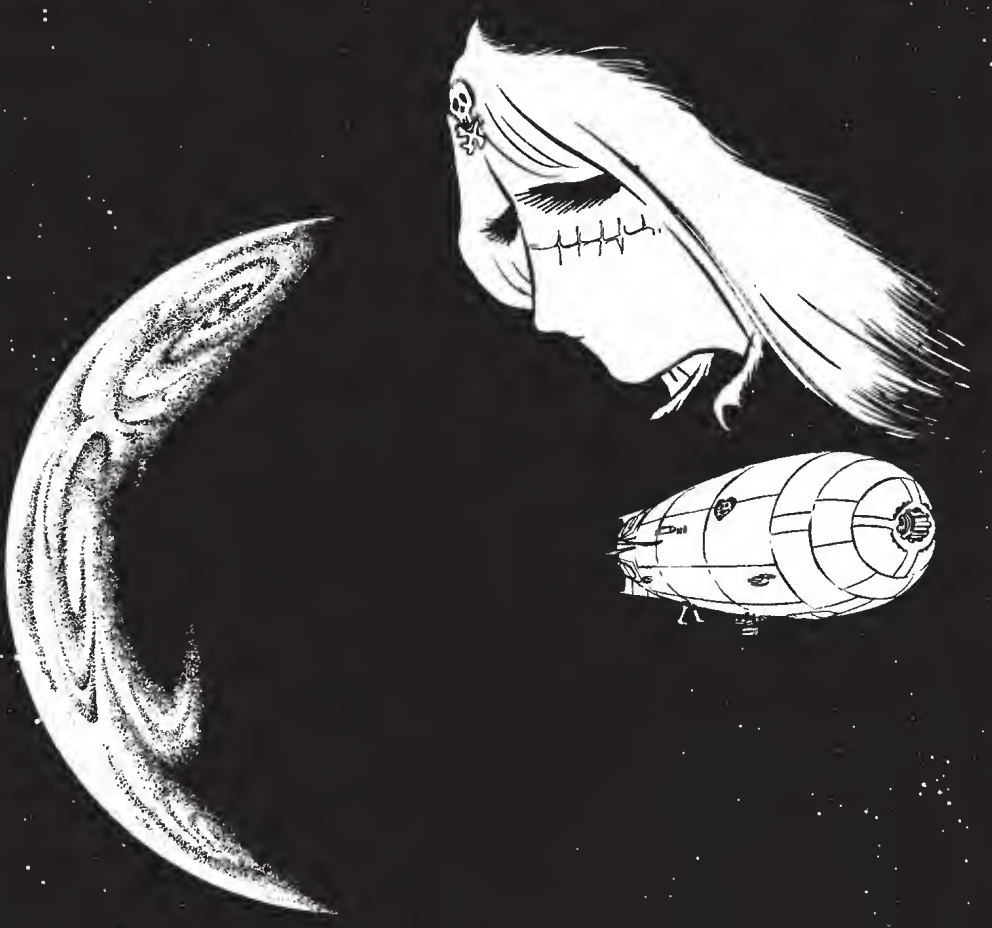

WHIRRRRRR


HOLD DISTANCE. IT'S DANGER-OUS.
THAT'S IT...
LET ME WORRY ABOUT THAT.
WHIRRRRRRR
WARNING!! WARNING!! PROXIMITY BREACH!!
ENGAGE ANTI-CRAFT SHOCK BATTERY!!


KRAKOOM
ZAARK
ZAARK
ZAARK
KRAKOOM
KRAKOOM
KRAKOOM


WHAT YOU SAID BEFORE... I HEARD ANOTHER SAY IT, LONG AGO...
...WHY?
...ALSO FLOWS IN YOU...
THE FIERCE BLOOD IN THIS HEART...
THIS PLANET... DO NOT ALLOW THE SZELL—OR ANYONE ELSE—TO TAKE IT FROM YOU.

THE PLANET HEAVY METAL... 16 AND 66 DID NOT NEED TO KNOW ITS HISTORY... THAT WORLD LIVES ONLY IN MY MEMORY. AND I CAN NEVER FORGET MY YOUTH, SPENT SLEEPING UNDER ITS SURFACE... I AM EMERALDAS... THE WOMAN WHO WANDERS THE OCEAN OF SPACE FOR ETERNITY... UNDER HER FLAG OF WHITE BONES ON RED BLOOD...



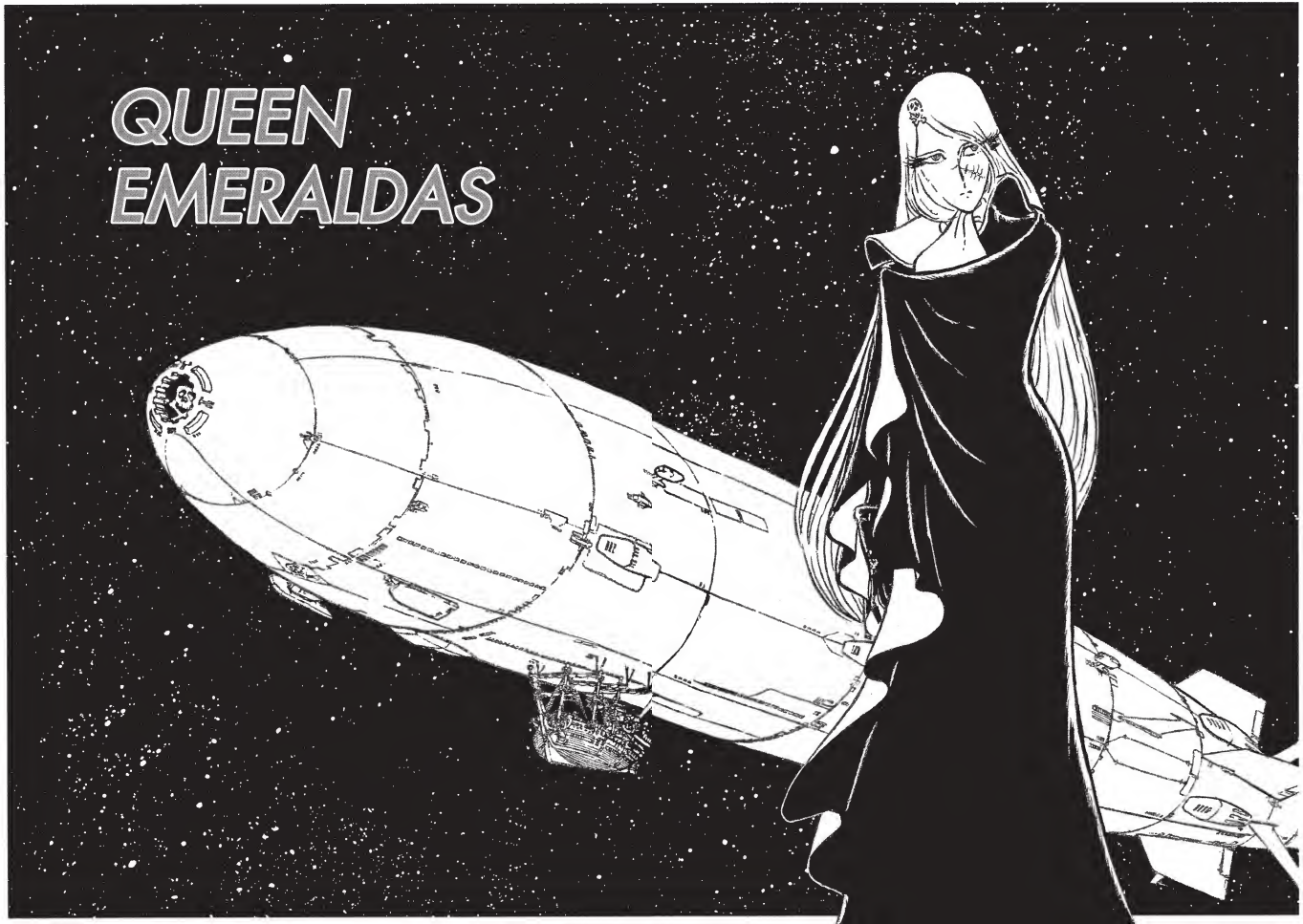
REWARD

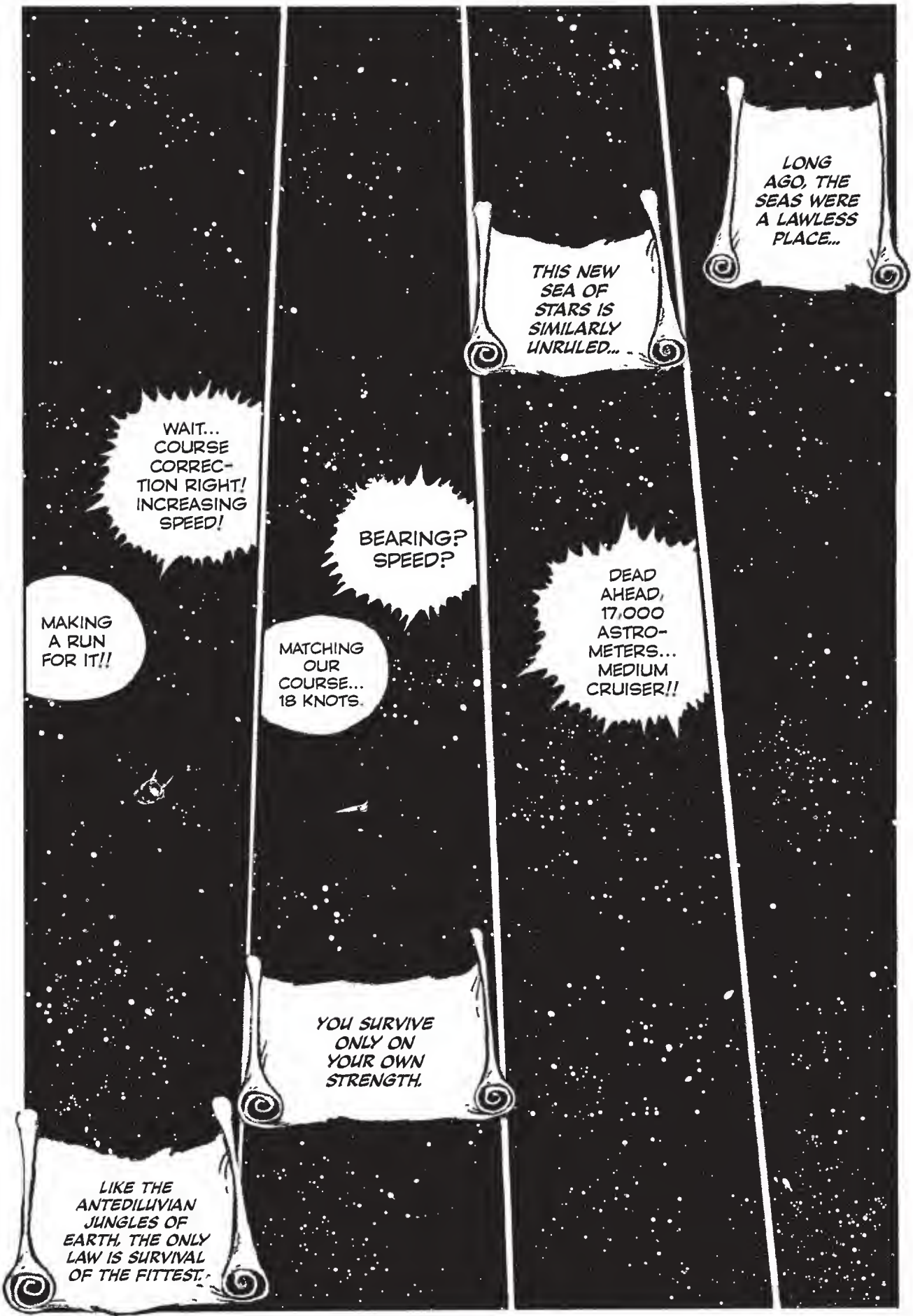
($5,000,000.00)

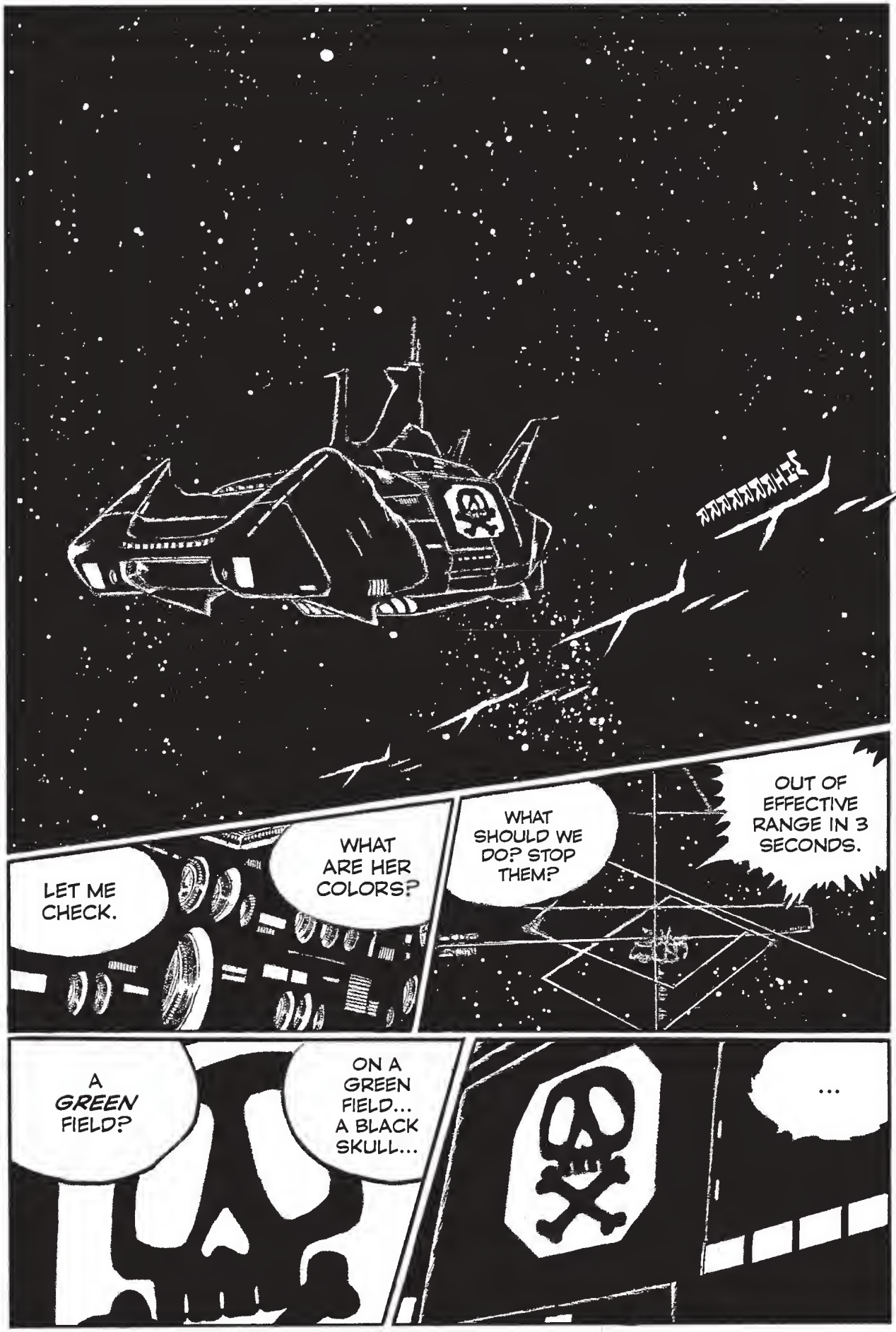
REWARD FOR THE CAPTURE, DEAD OR ALIVE
OF ONE WM, WRIGHT, BETTER KNOWN AS

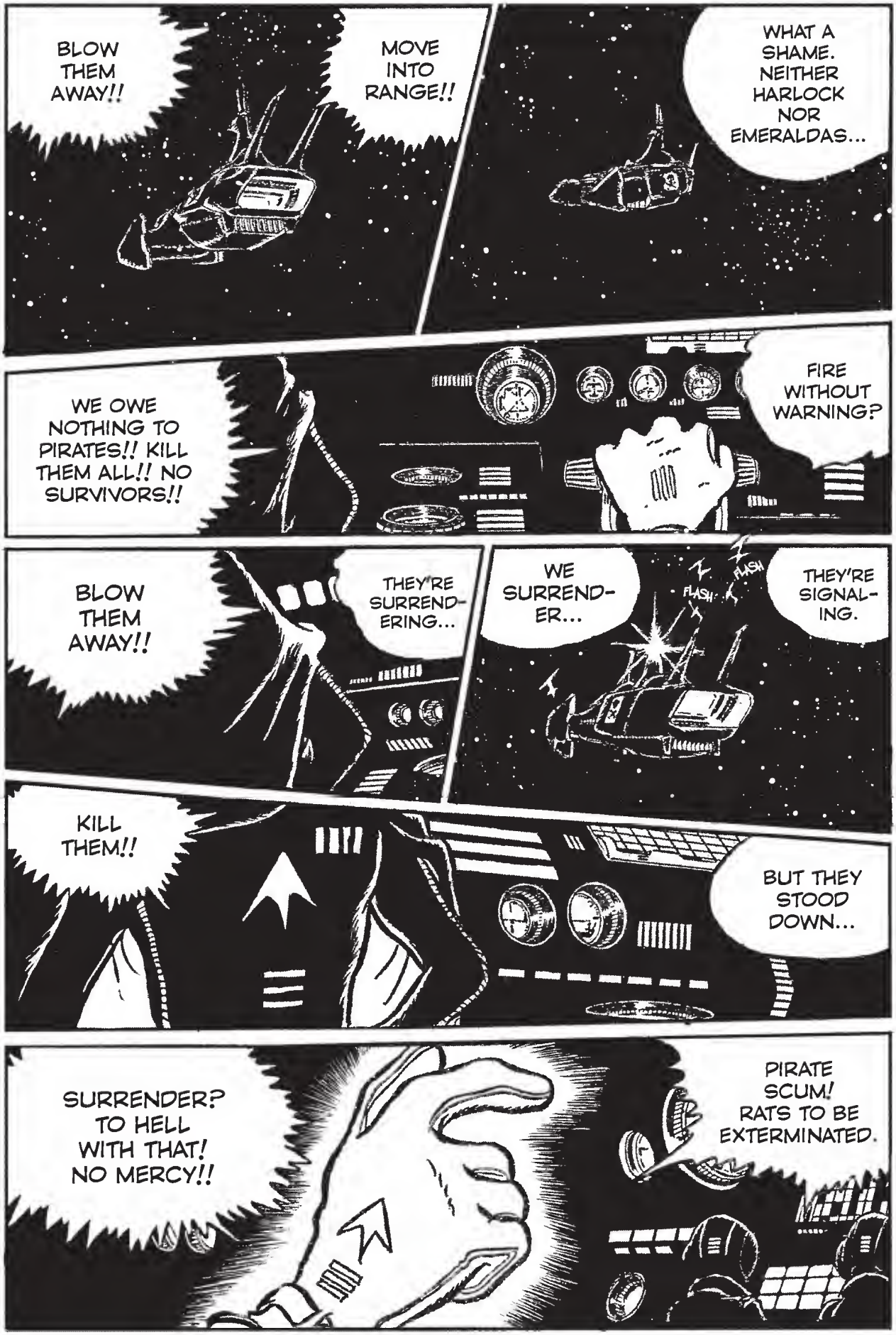
"EMERALDAS"

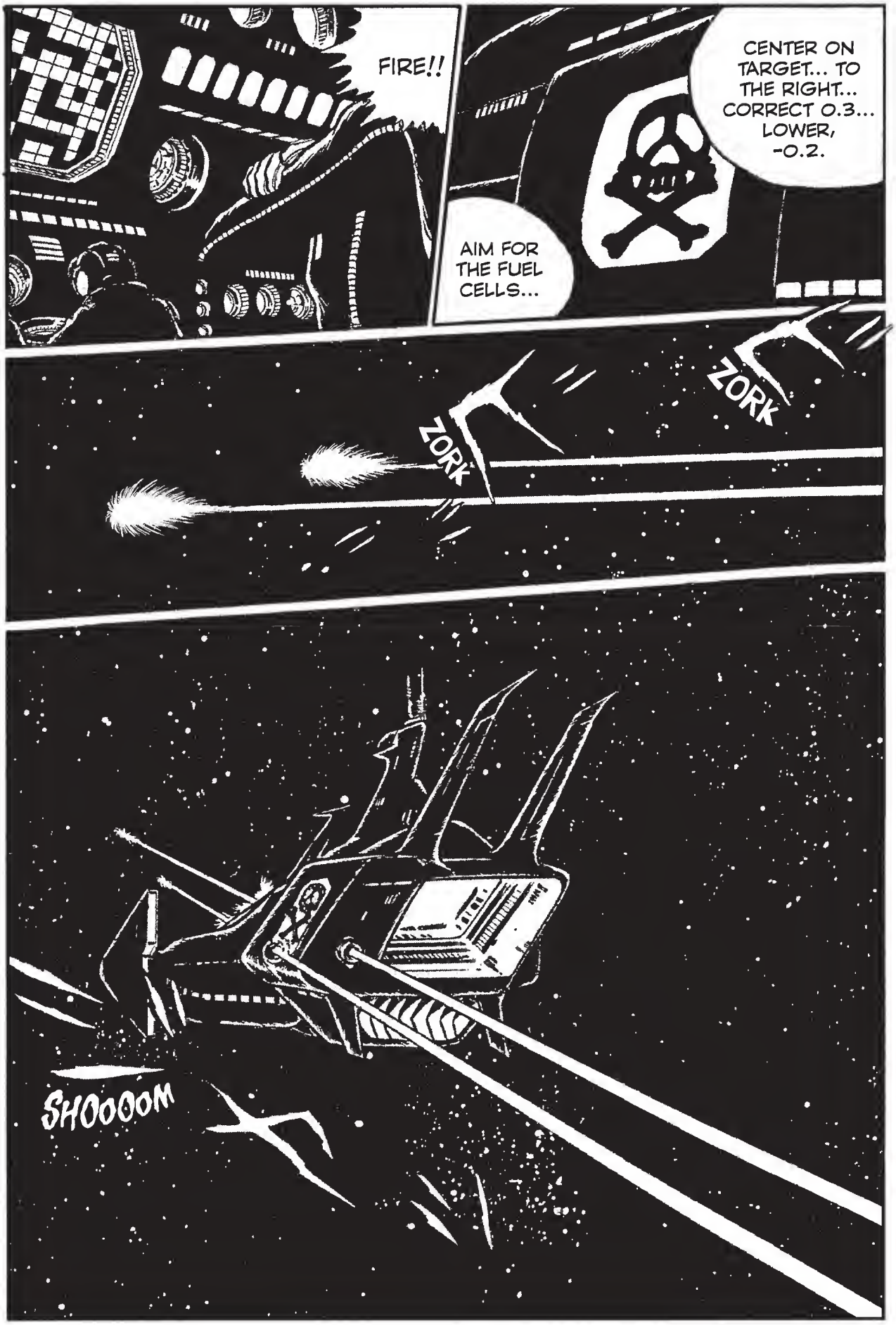
DEAD OR ALIVE!
"QUEEN EMERALDAS"

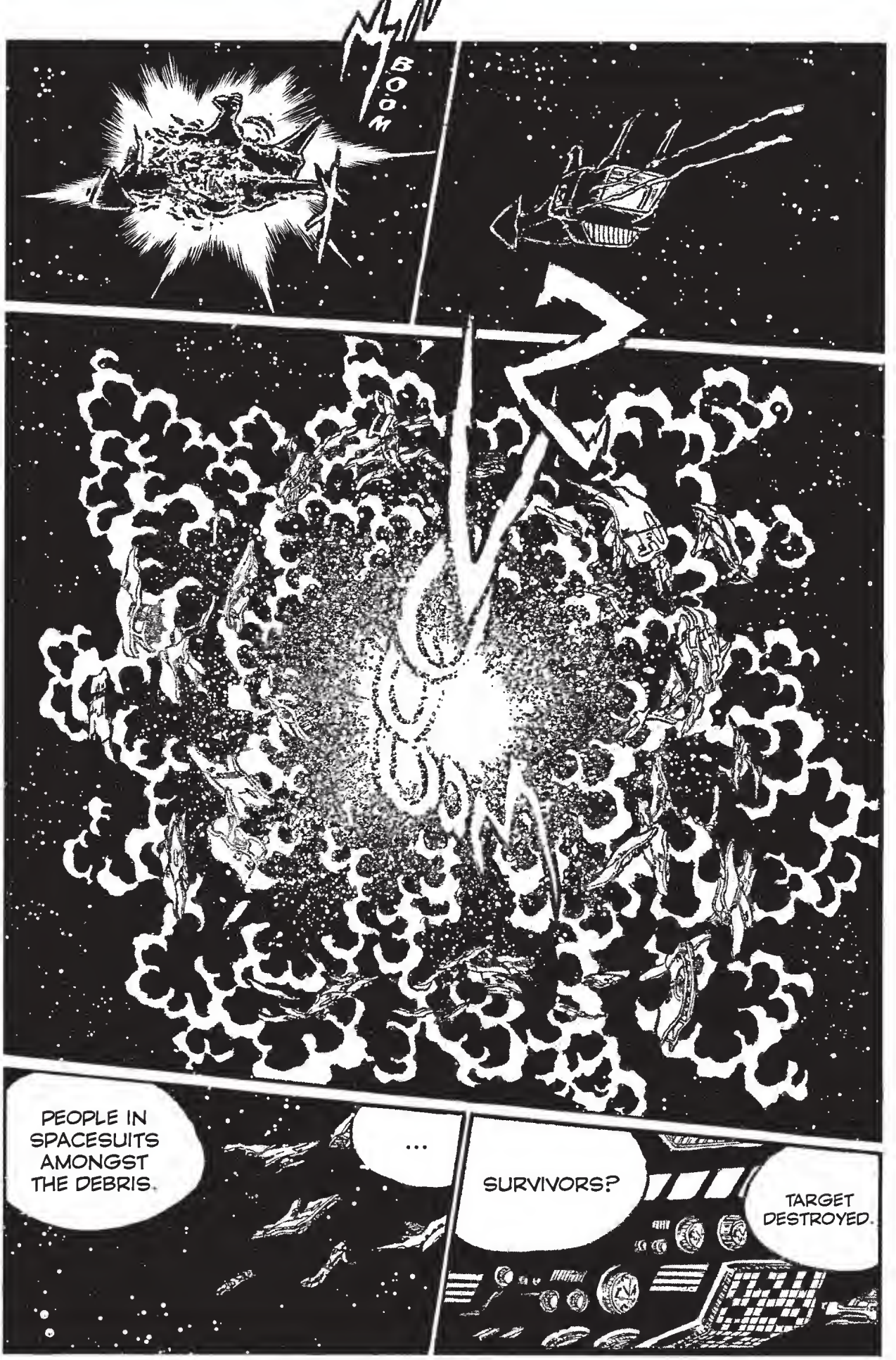

QUEEN
EMERALDAS

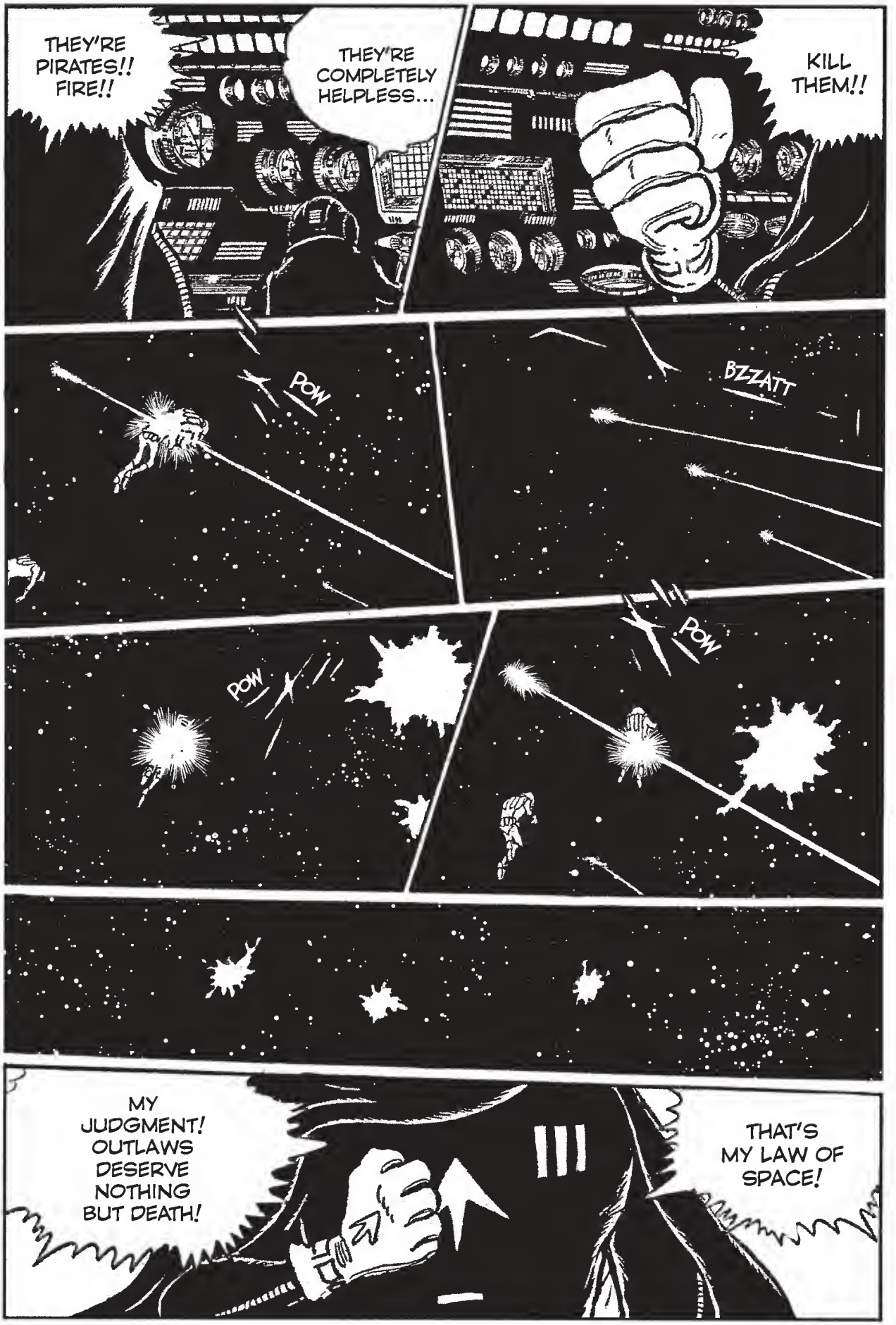

LONG AGO, THE SEAS WERE A LAWLESS PLACE...
THIS NEW SEA OF STARS IS SIMILARLY UNRULED...
DEAD AHEAD, 17,000 ASTRO-METERS... MEDIUM CRUISER!!
BEARING? SPEED?
MATCHING OUR COURSE... 18 KNOTS.
WAIT... COURSE CORREC-TION RIGHT! INCREASING SPEED!
MAKING A RUN FOR IT!!
YOU SURVIVE ONLY ON YOUR OWN STRENGTH.
LIKE THE ANTEDILUVIAN JUNGLES OF EARTH, THE ONLY LAW IS SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST.

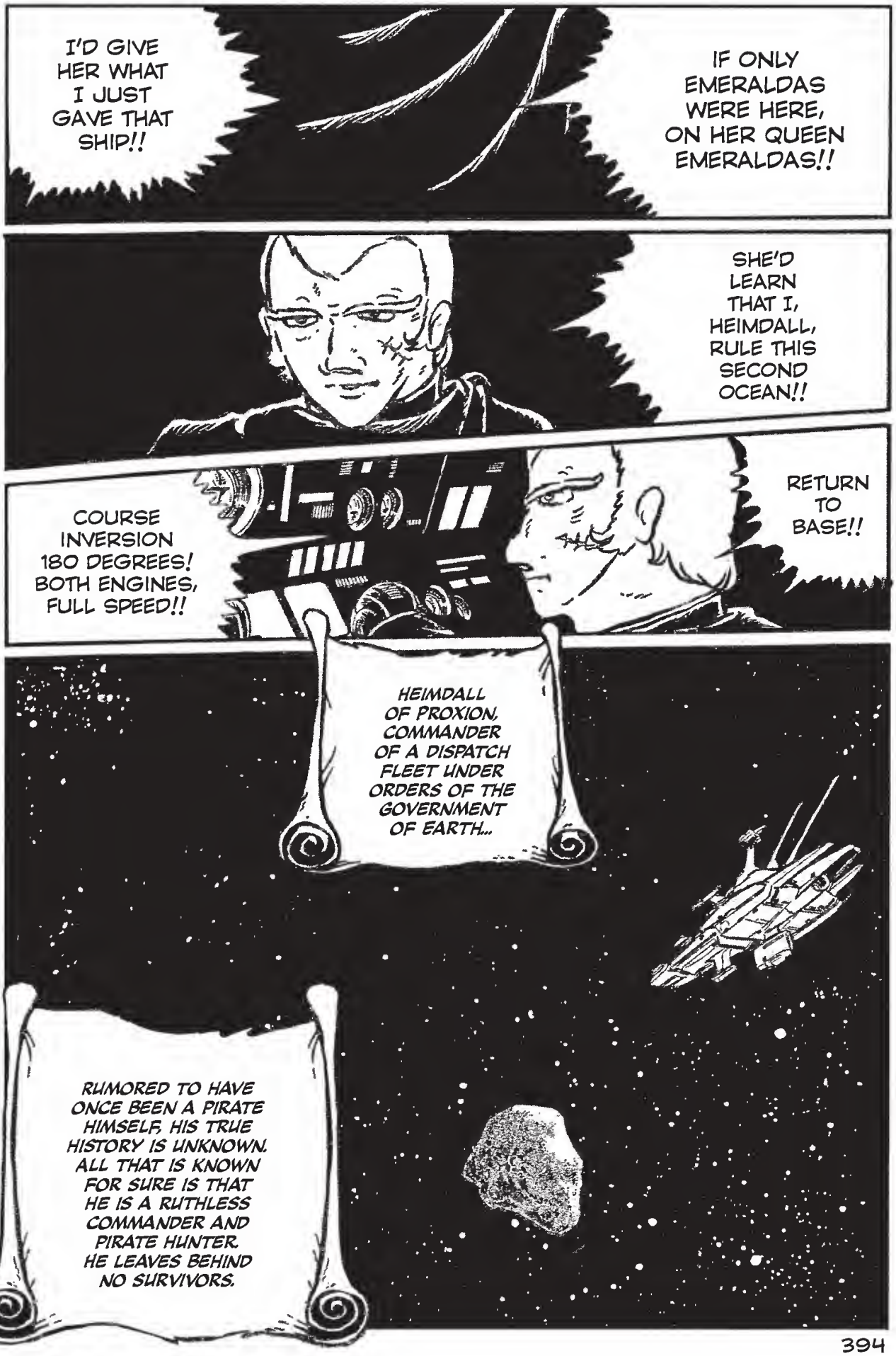

WHAAAAAAAHEE
LET ME CHECK.
WHAT ARE HER COLORS?
WHAT SHOULD WE DO? STOP THEM?
OUT OF EFFECTIVE RANGE IN 3 SECONDS.
A GREEN FIELD?
ON A GREEN FIELD... A BLACK SKULL...
...

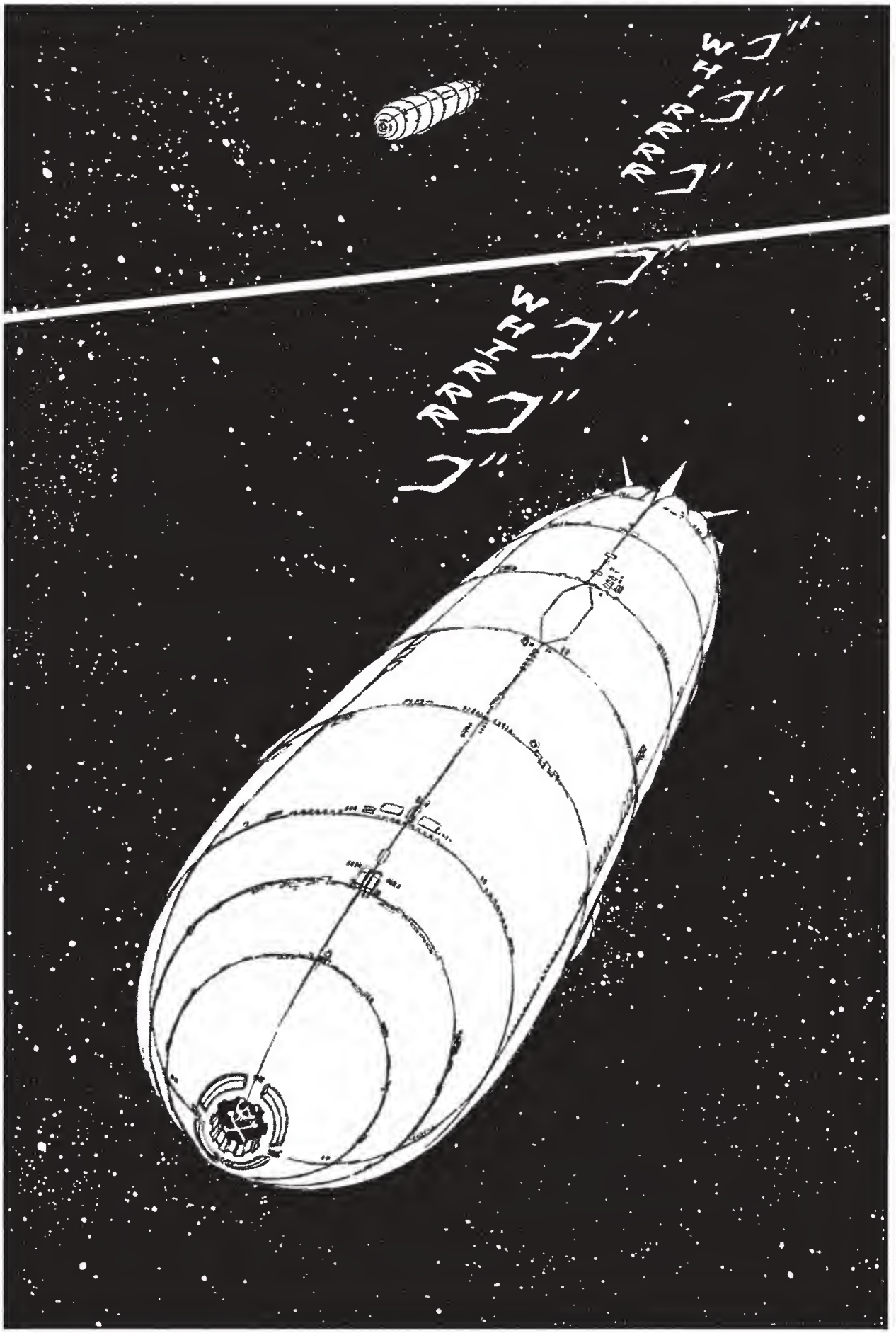

BLOW THEM AWAY!!
MOVE INTO RANGE!!
WHAT A SHAME. NEITHER HARLOCK NOR EMERALDAS...
WE OWE NOTHING TO PIRATES!! KILL THEM ALL!! NO SURVIVORS!!
FIRE WITHOUT WARNING?
BLOW THEM AWAY!!
THEY'RE SURREND-ERING...
WE SURREND-ER...
FLASH
FLASH
THEY'RE SIGNAL-ING.
KILL THEM!!
BUT THEY STOOD DOWN...
SURRENDER? TO HELL WITH THAT! NO MERCY!!
PIRATE SCUM! RATS TO BE EXTERMINATED.

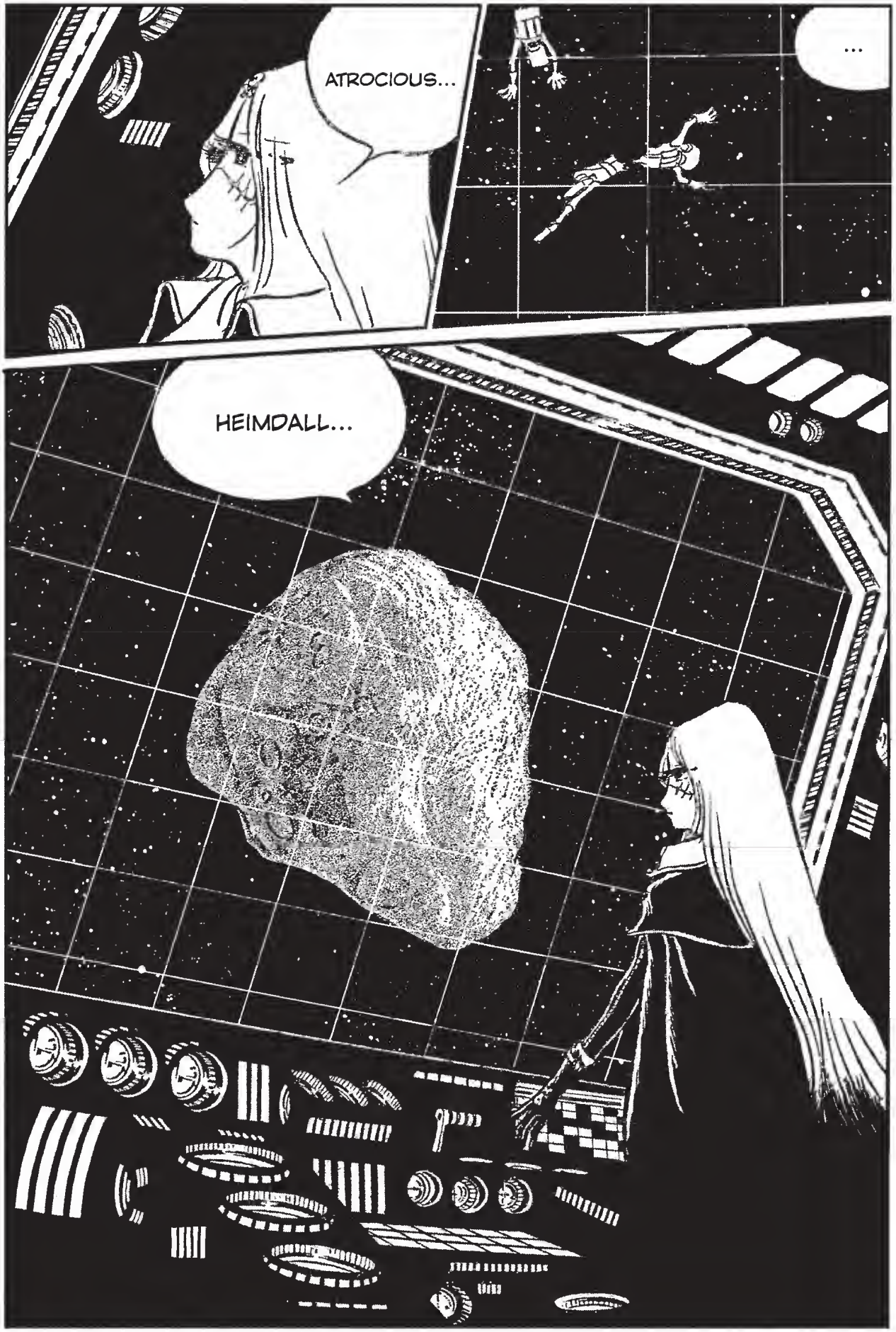

FIRE!!
CENTER ON TARGET... TO THE RIGHT... CORRECT 0.3... LOWER, -0.2.
AIM FOR THE FUEL CELLS...
ZORK
ZORK
SHOOOOM

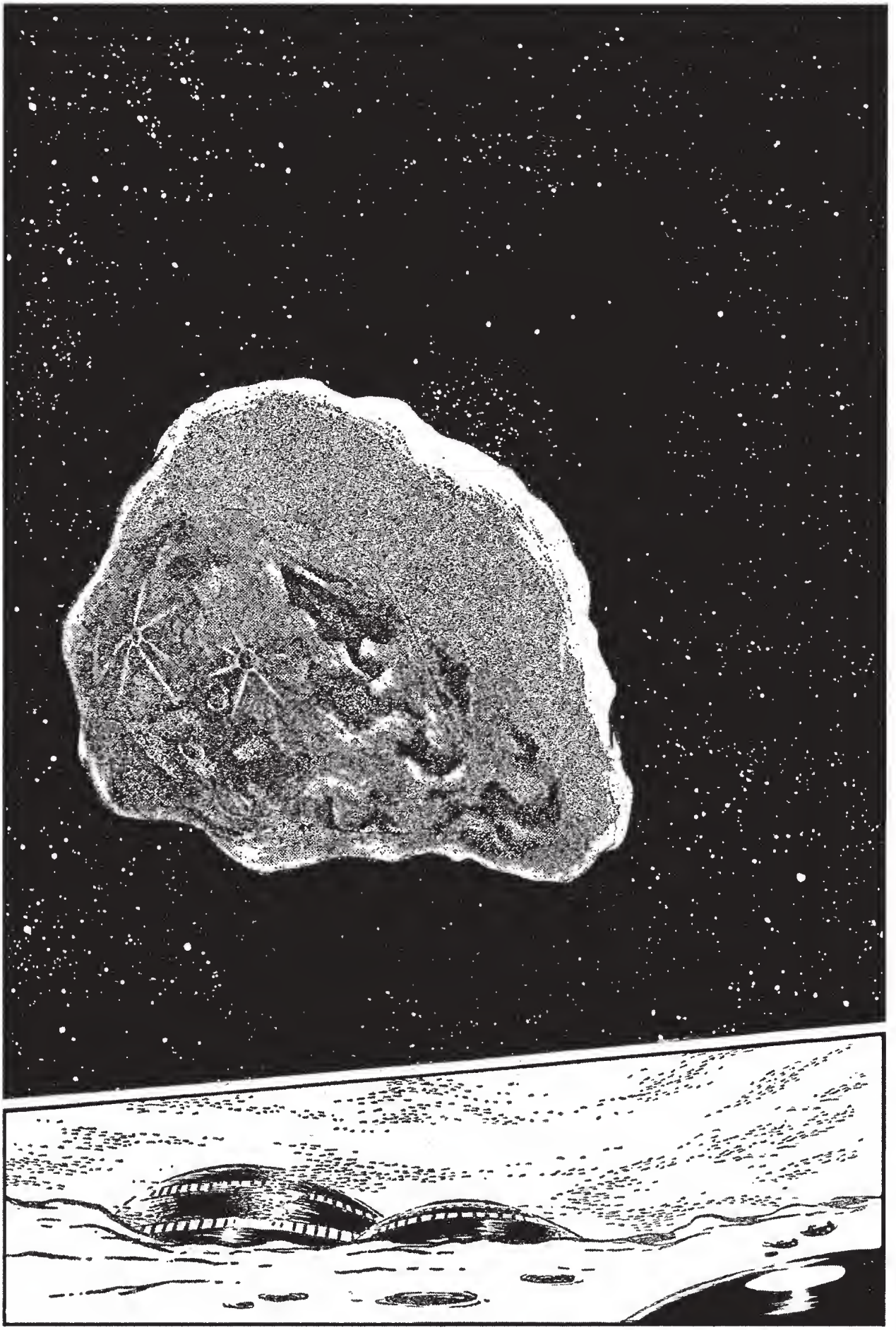

BOOM
PEOPLE IN SPACESUITS AMONGST THE DEBRIS.
...
SURVIVORS?
TARGET DESTROYED.

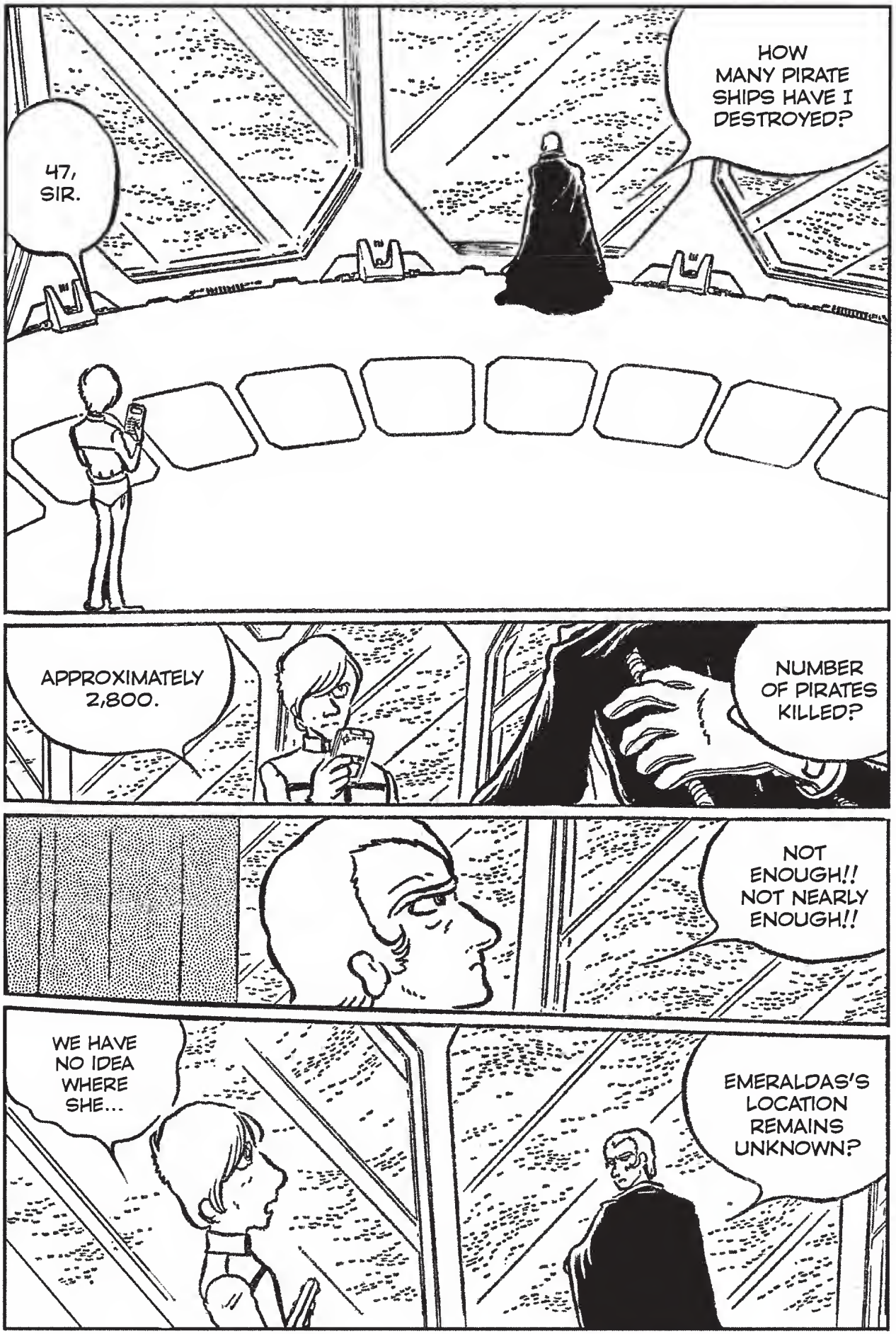

THEY'RE PIRATES!! FIRE!!
THEY'RE COMPLETELY HELPLESS...
KILL THEM!!
POW
BZZATT
POW
POW
MY JUDGMENT! OUTLAWS DESERVE NOTHING BUT DEATH!
THAT'S MY LAW OF SPACE!

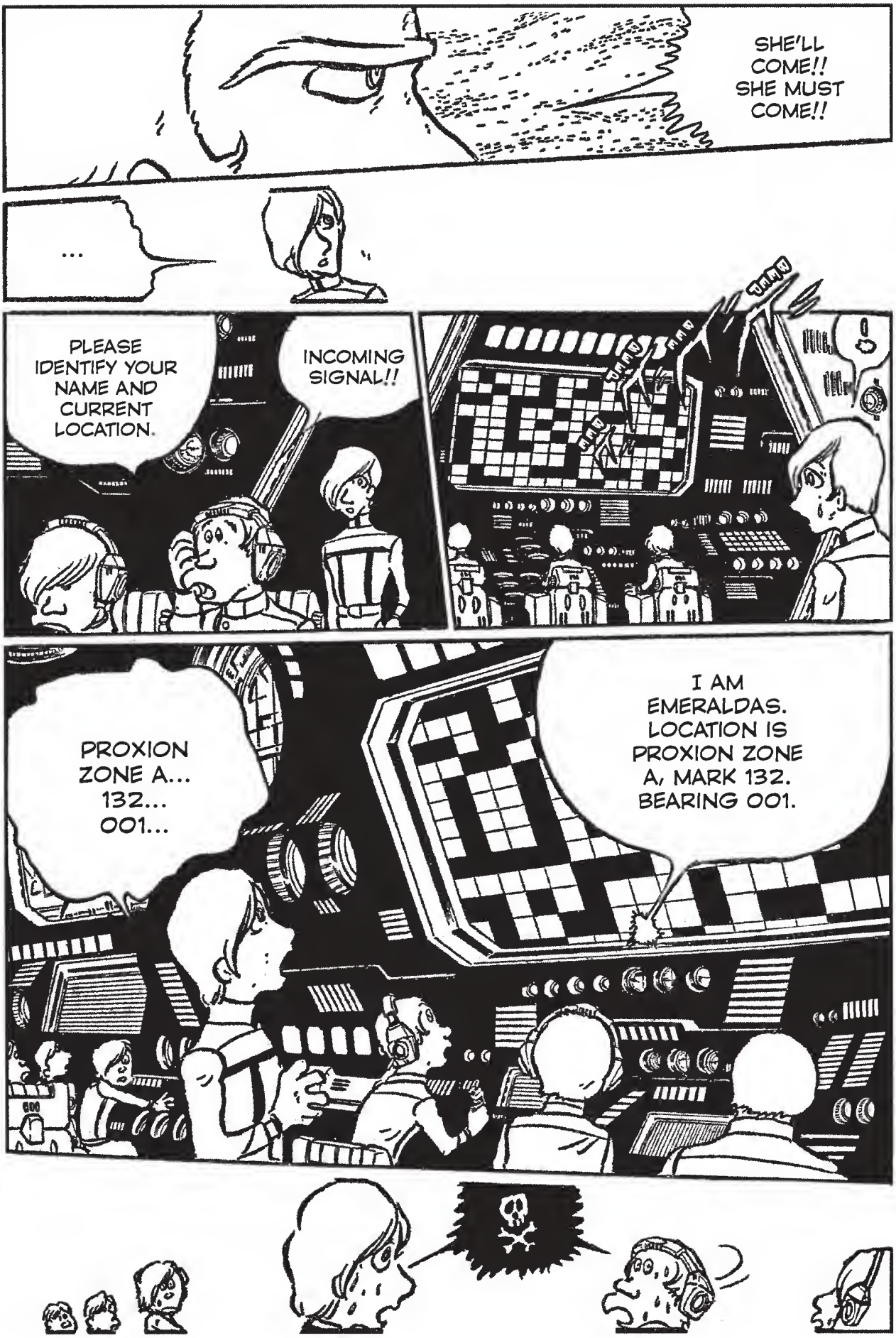

I'D GIVE HER WHAT I JUST GAVE THAT SHIP!!
IF ONLY EMERALDAS WERE HERE, ON HER QUEEN EMERALDAS!!
SHE'D LEARN THAT I, HEIMDALL, RULE THIS SECOND OCEAN!!
COURSE INVERSION 180 DEGREES! BOTH ENGINES, FULL SPEED!!
RETURN TO BASE!!
HEIMDALL OF PROXION, COMMANDER OF A DISPATCH FLEET UNDER ORDERS OF THE GOVERNMENT OF EARTH...
RUMORED TO HAVE ONCE BEEN A PIRATE HIMSELF, HIS TRUE HISTORY IS UNKNOWN. ALL THAT IS KNOWN FOR SURE IS THAT HE IS A RUTHLESS COMMANDER AND PIRATE HUNTER. HE LEAVES BEHIND NO SURVIVORS.

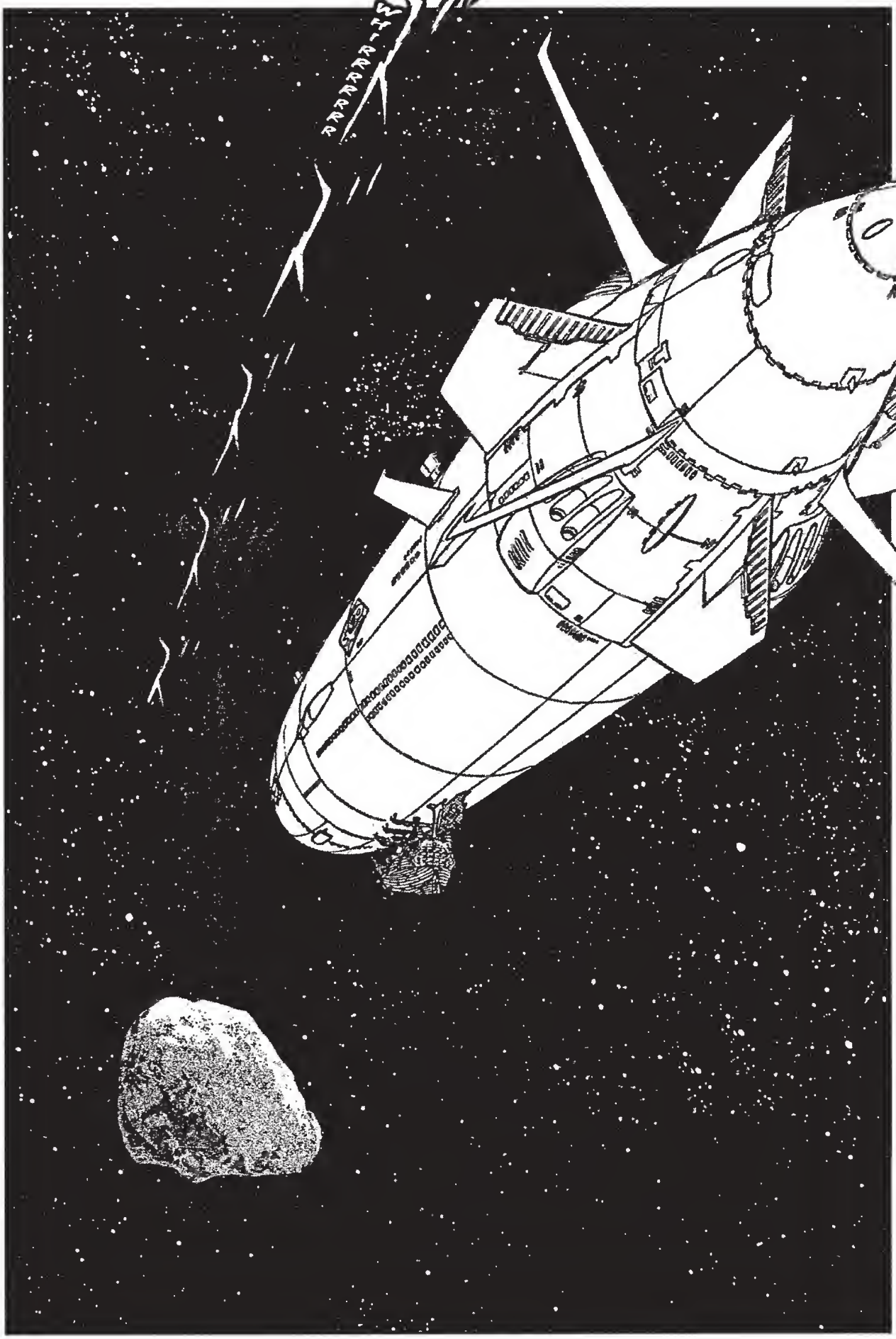


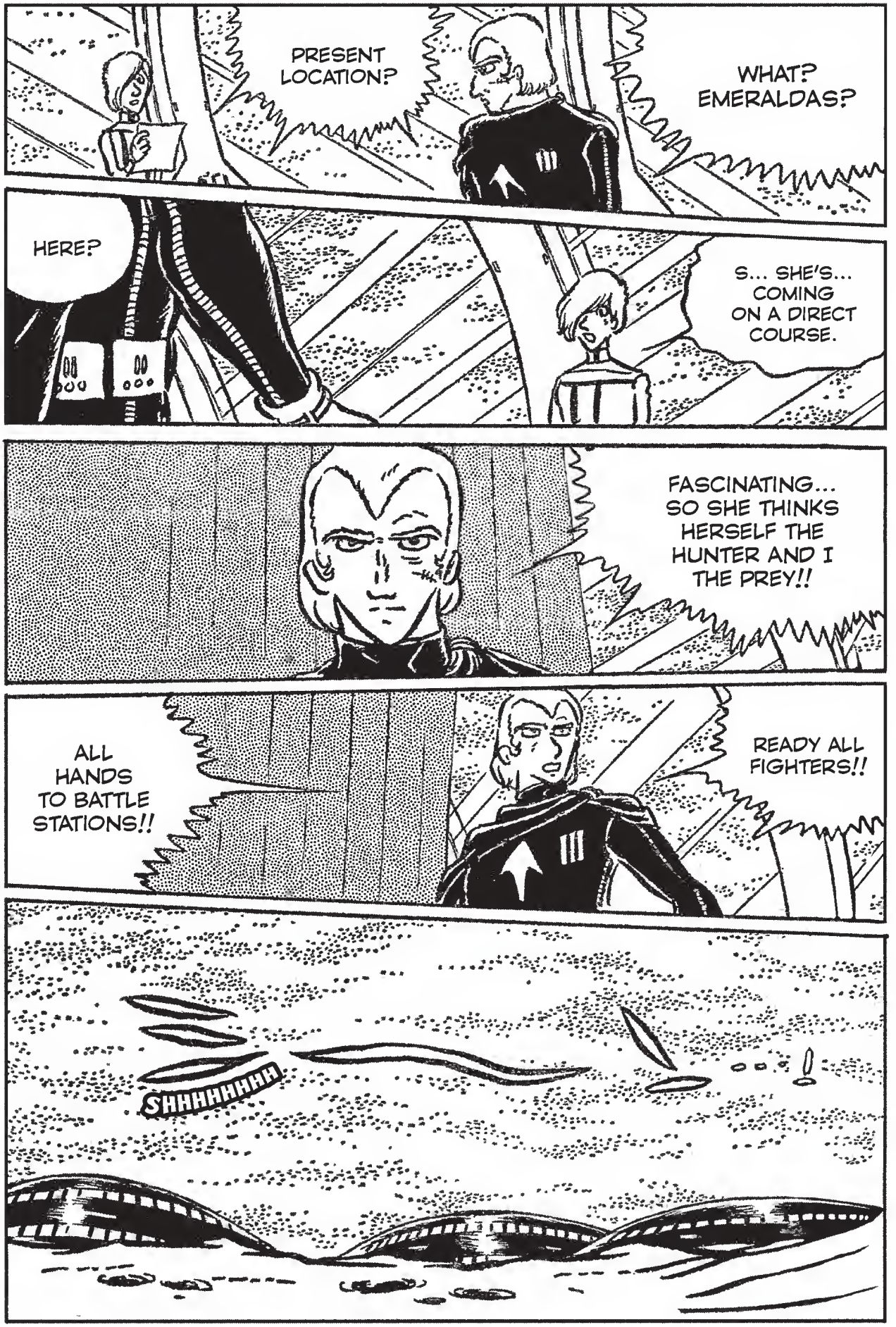

ATROCIOUS...
...
HEIMDALL...

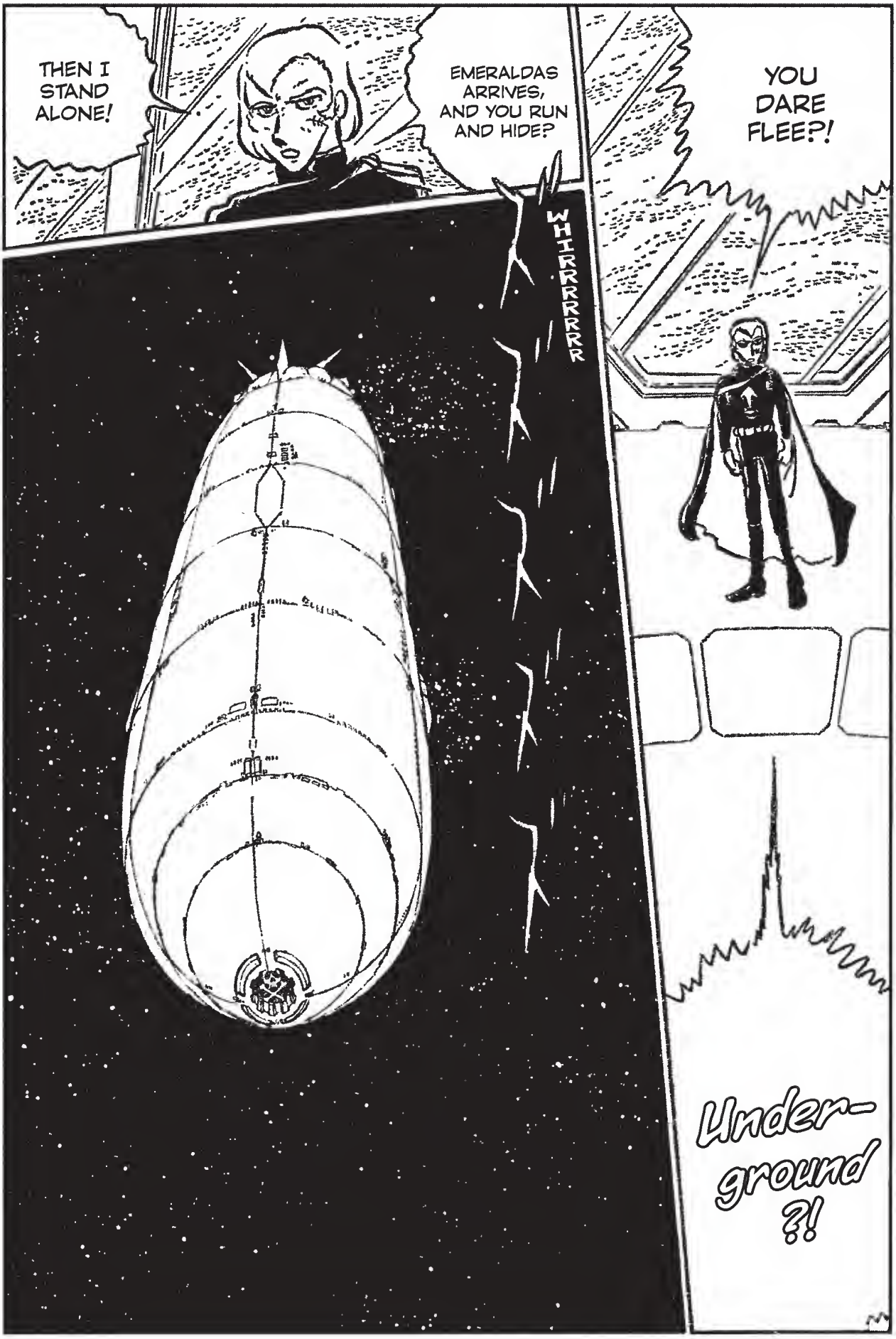


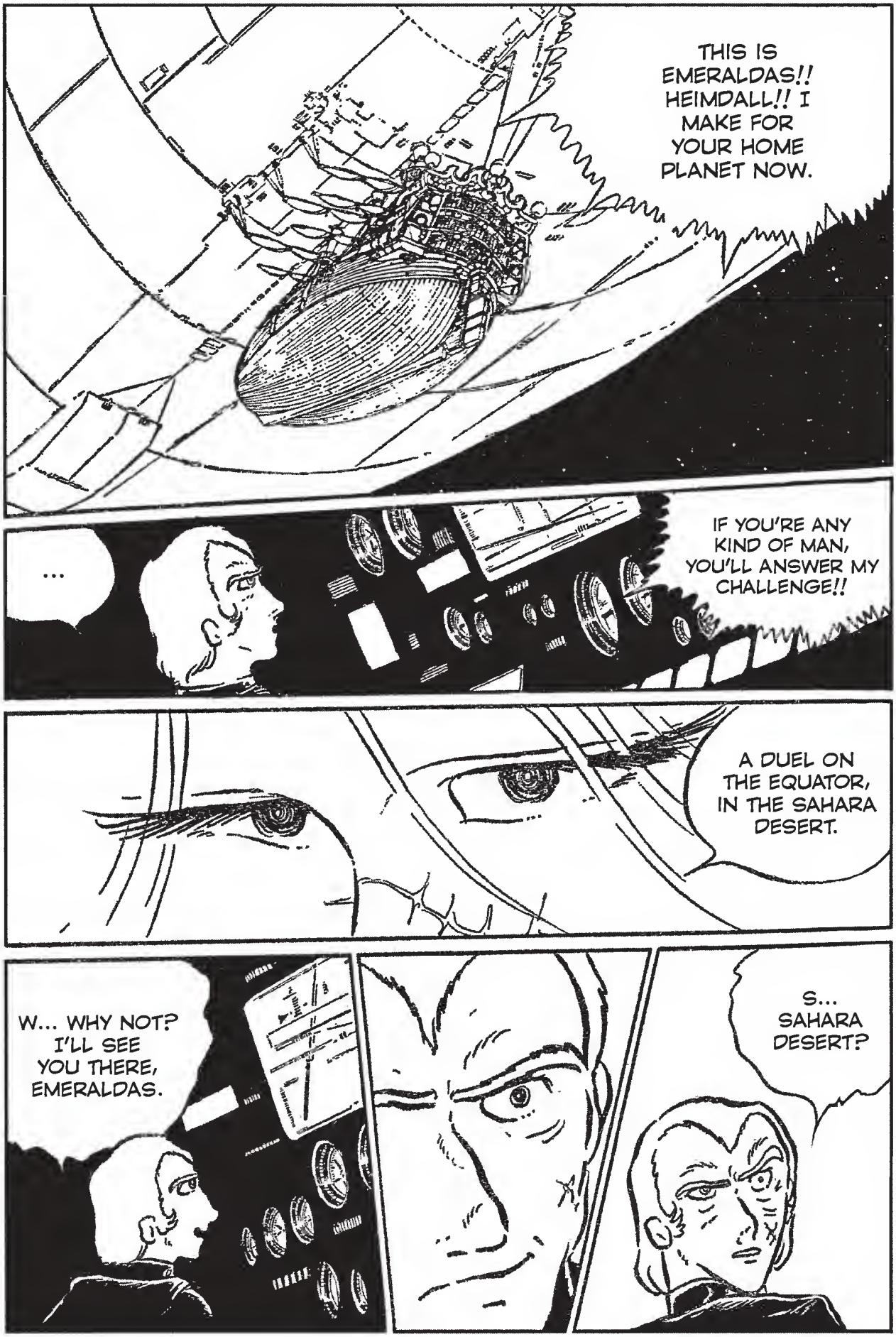

HOW MANY PIRATE SHIPS HAVE I DESTROYED?
47, SIR.
NUMBER OF PIRATES KILLED?
APPROXIMATELY 2,800.
NOT ENOUGH!! NOT NEARLY ENOUGH!!
EMERALDAS'S LOCATION REMAINS UNKNOWN?
WE HAVE NO IDEA WHERE SHE...

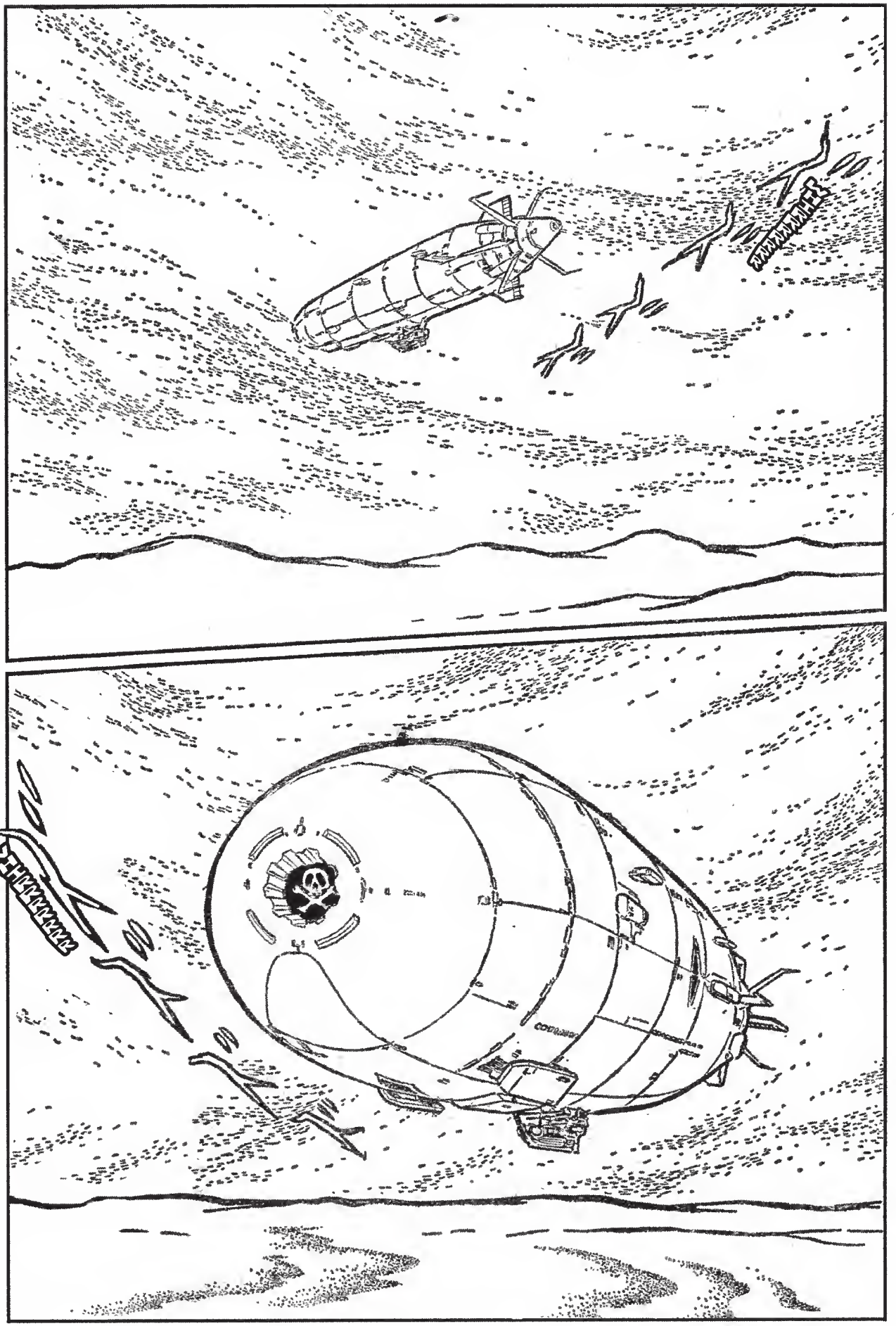

SHE'LL COME!! SHE MUST COME!!
...
PLEASE IDENTIFY YOUR NAME AND CURRENT LOCATION.
INCOMING SIGNAL!!
BEEP
PROXION ZONE A... 132... 001...
I AM EMERALDAS. LOCATION IS PROXION ZONE A, MARK 132. BEARING 001.

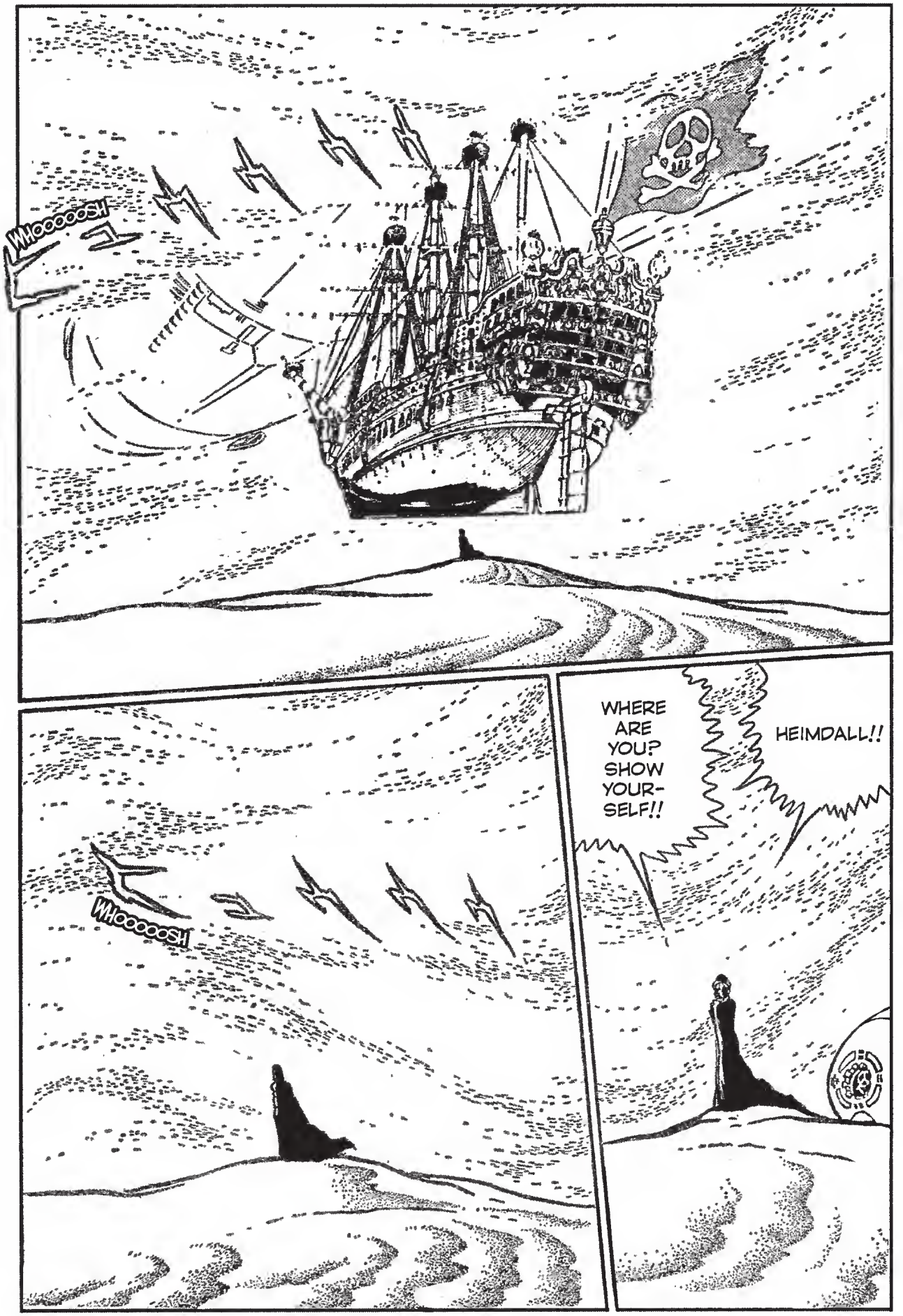


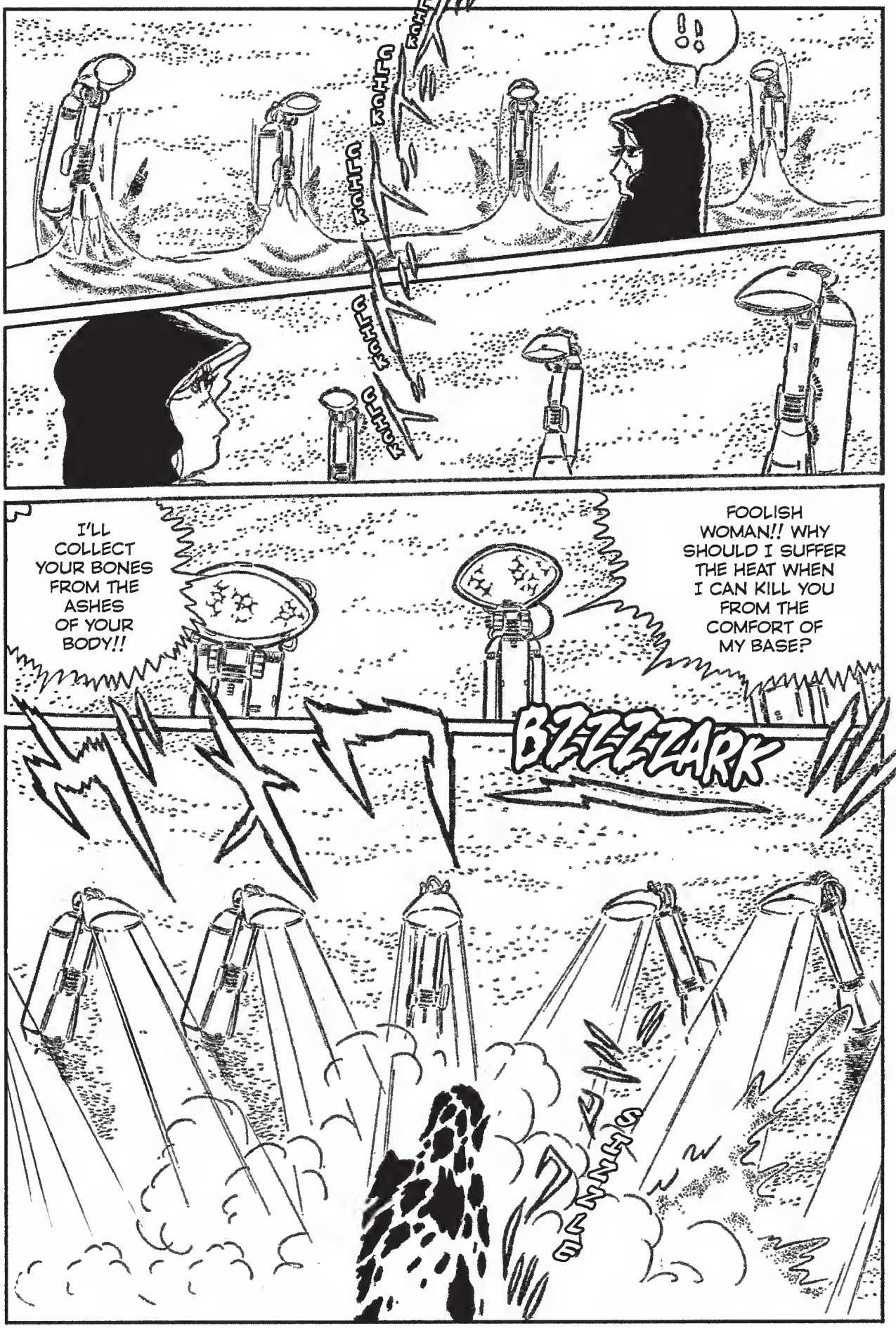

PRESENT LOCATION?
WHAT? EMERALDAS?
HERE?
S... SHE'S... COMING ON A DIRECT COURSE.
FASCINATING... SO SHE THINKS HERSELF THE HUNTER AND I THE PREY!!
ALL HANDS TO BATTLE STATIONS!!
READY ALL FIGHTERS!!
SHHHHHHH

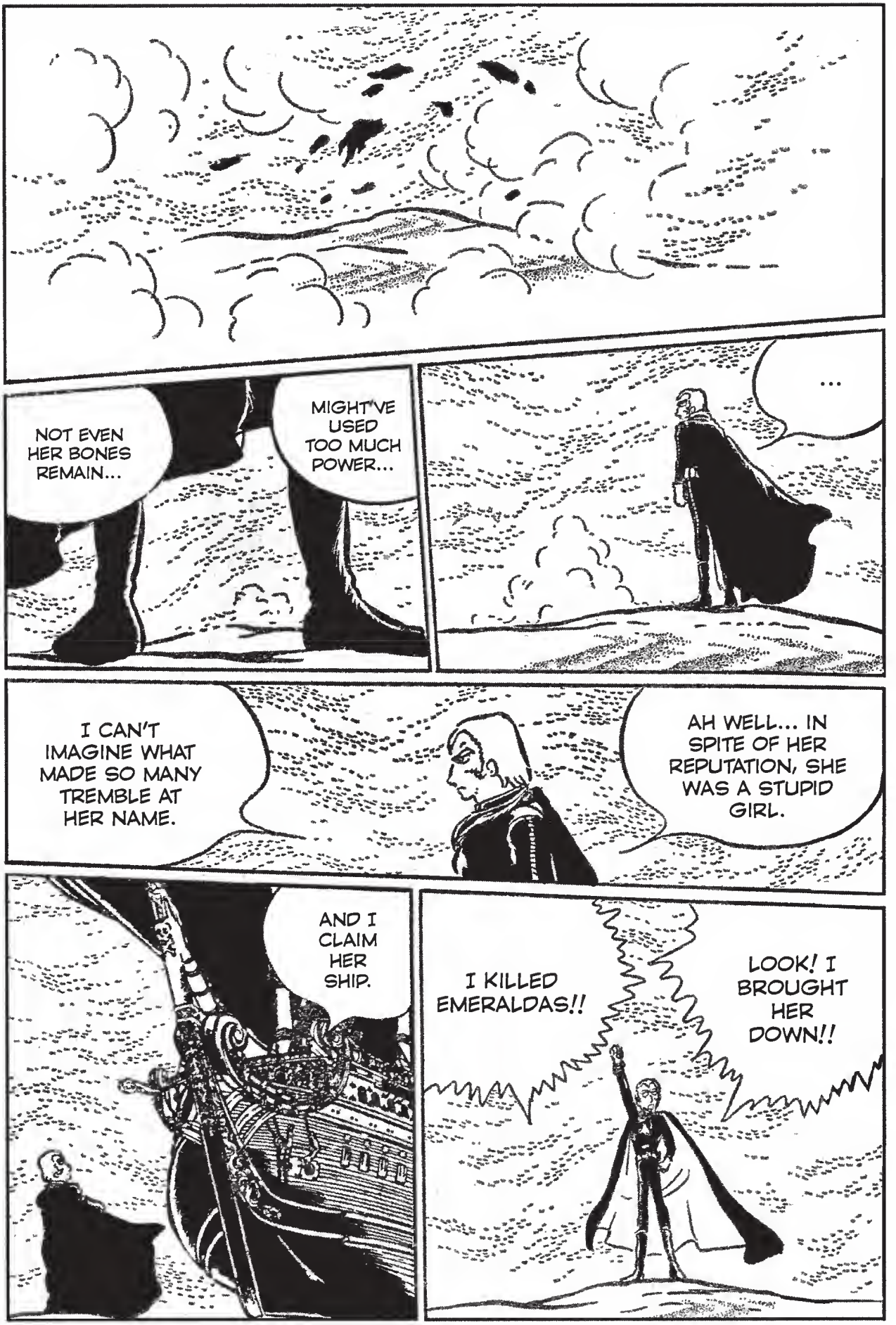

THEN I STAND ALONE!
EMERALDAS ARRIVES, AND YOU RUN AND HIDE?
WHIRRRRRRR
YOU DARE FLEE?!
Under-ground?!

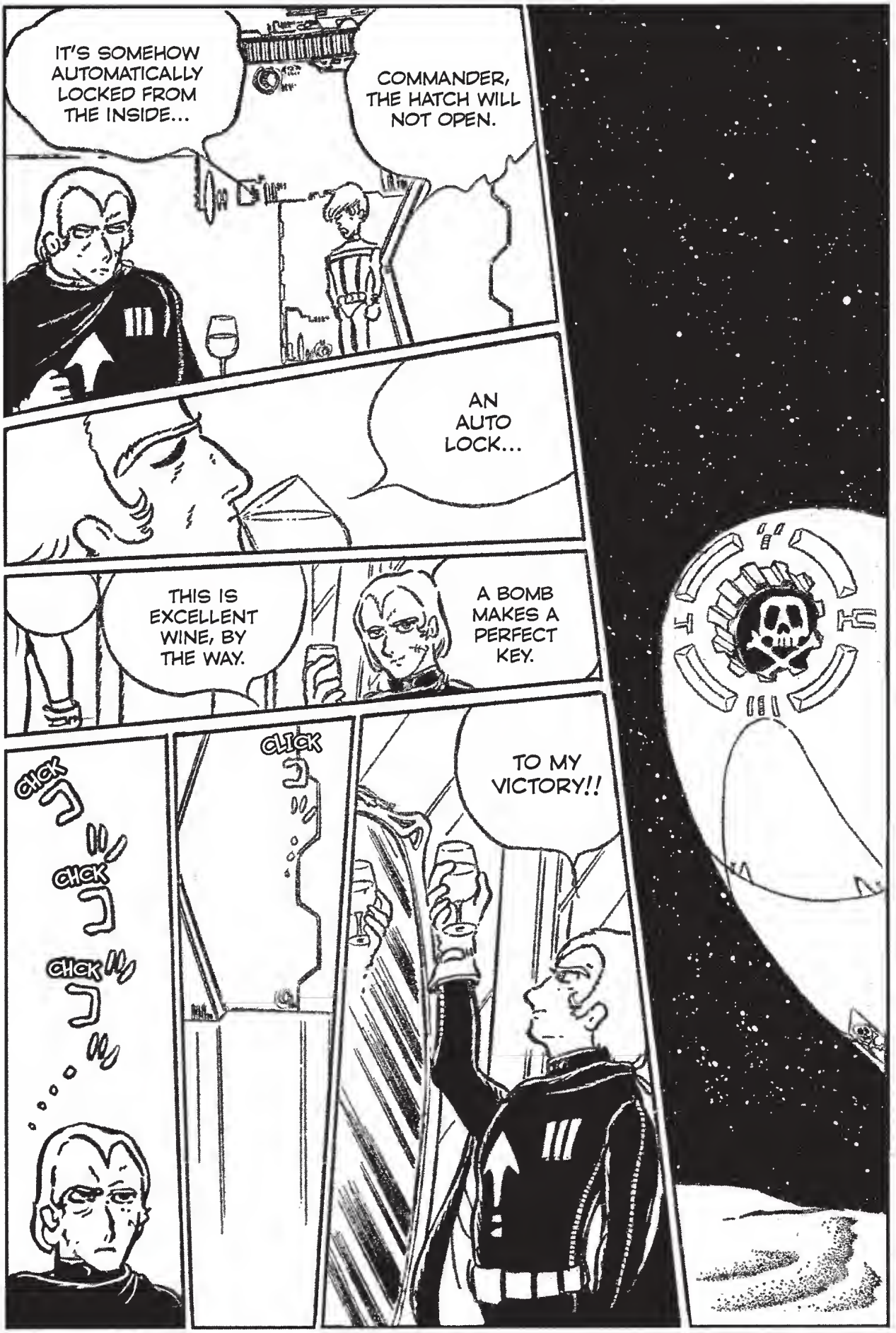

THIS IS EMERALDAS!! HEIMDALL!! I MAKE FOR YOUR HOME PLANET NOW.
...
IF YOU'RE ANY KIND OF MAN, YOU'LL ANSWER MY CHALLENGE!!
A DUEL ON THE EQUATOR, IN THE SAHARA DESERT.
W... WHY NOT? I'LL SEE YOU THERE, EMERALDAS.
S... SAHARA DESERT?

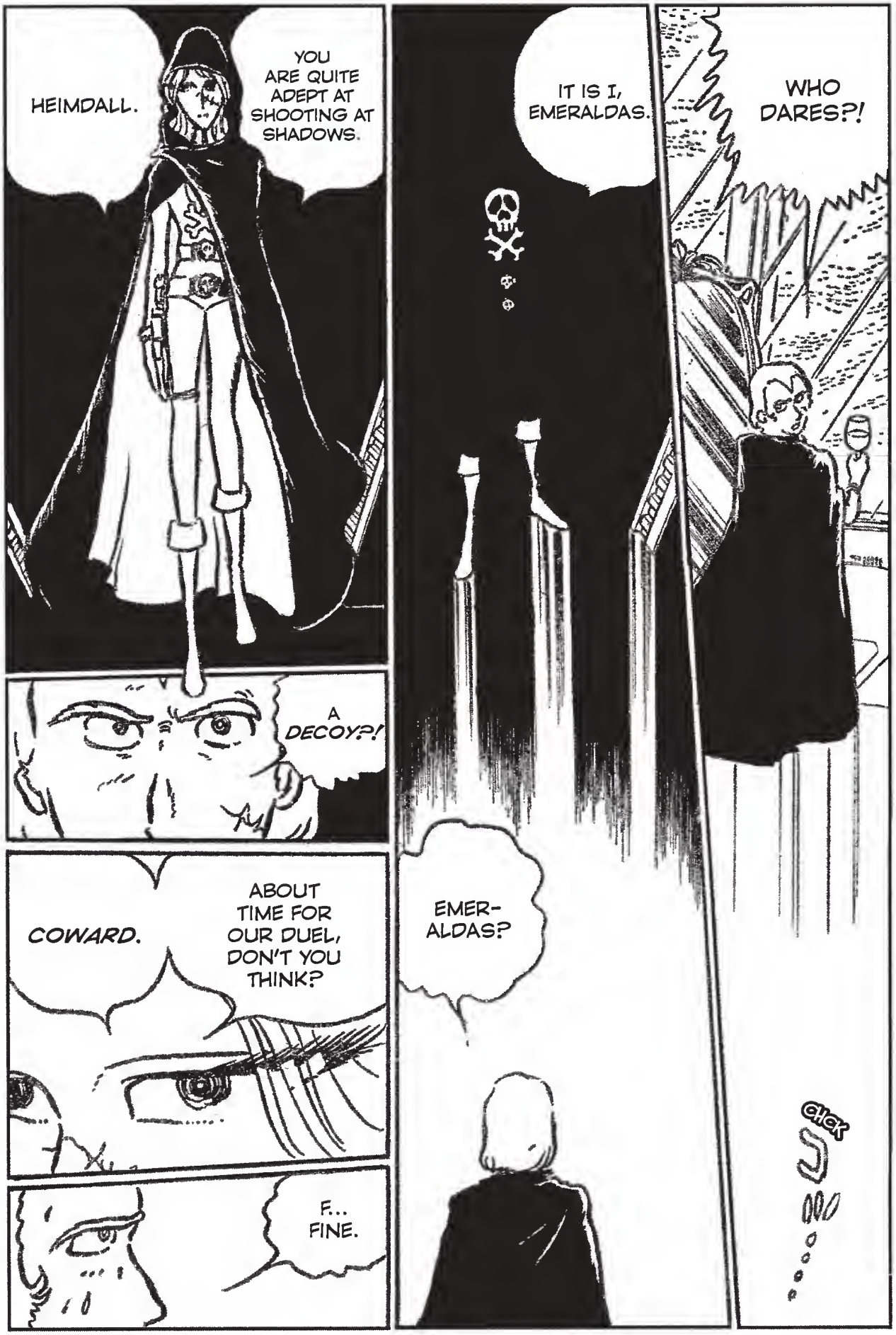

WWWWHH

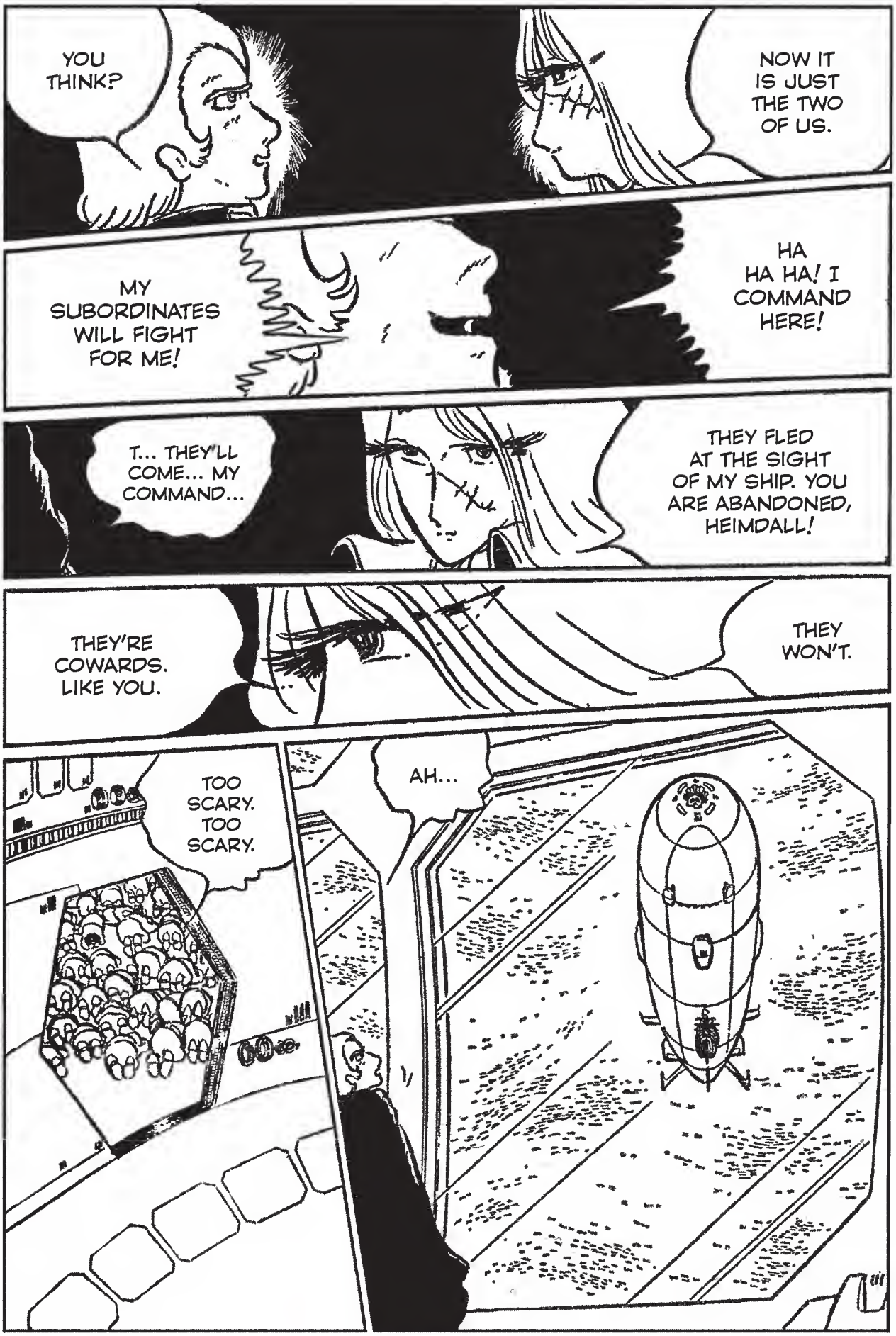

WHOOOOOSH
WHOOOOOSH
WHERE ARE YOU? SHOW YOUR-SELF!!
HEIMDALL!!

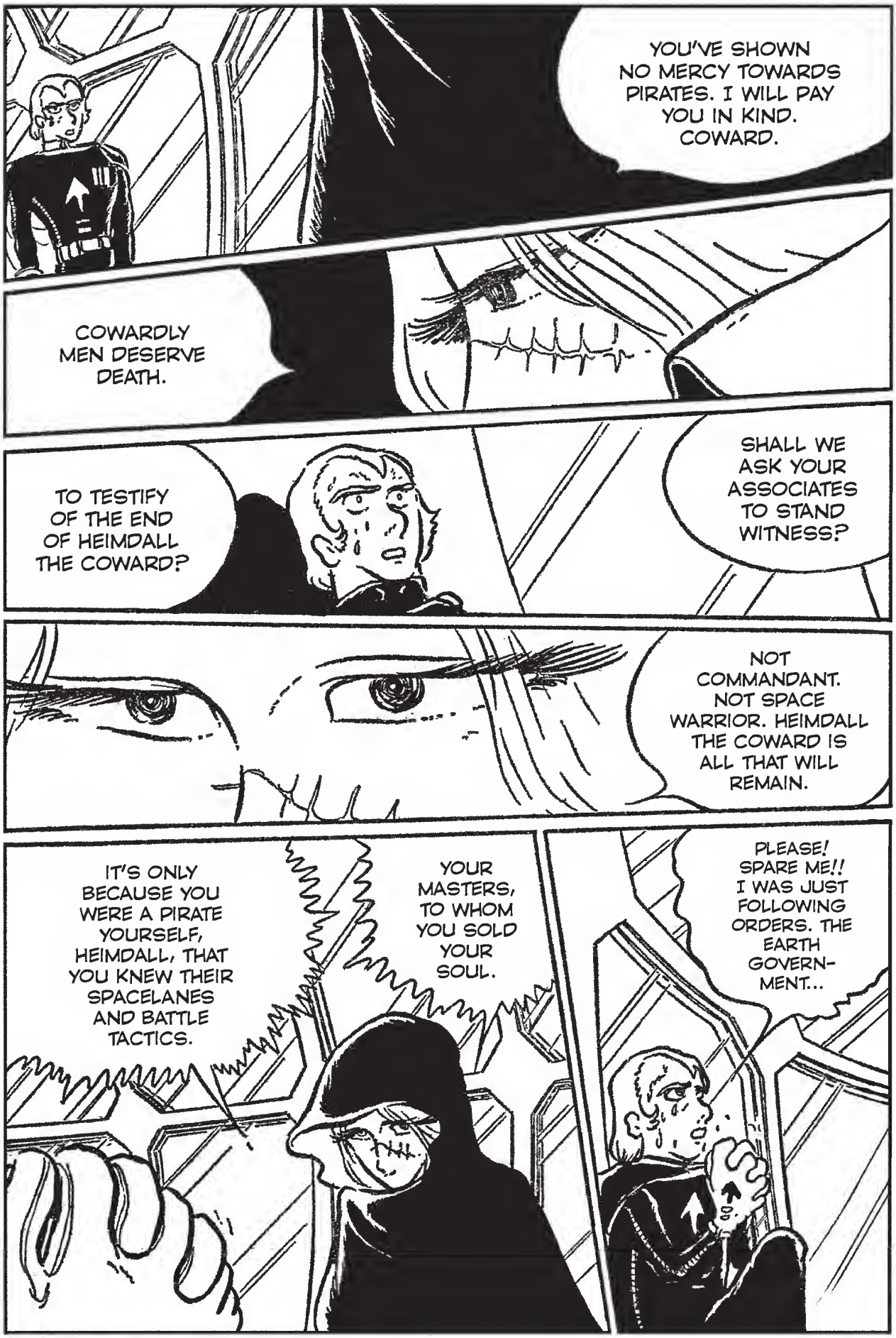

!!
CRACK
CRACK
CRACK
CRACK
I'LL COLLECT YOUR BONES FROM THE ASHES OF YOUR BODY!!
FOOLISH WOMAN!! WHY SHOULD I SUFFER THE HEAT WHEN I CAN KILL YOU FROM THE COMFORT OF MY BASE?
BZZZZARK
SHWWLG

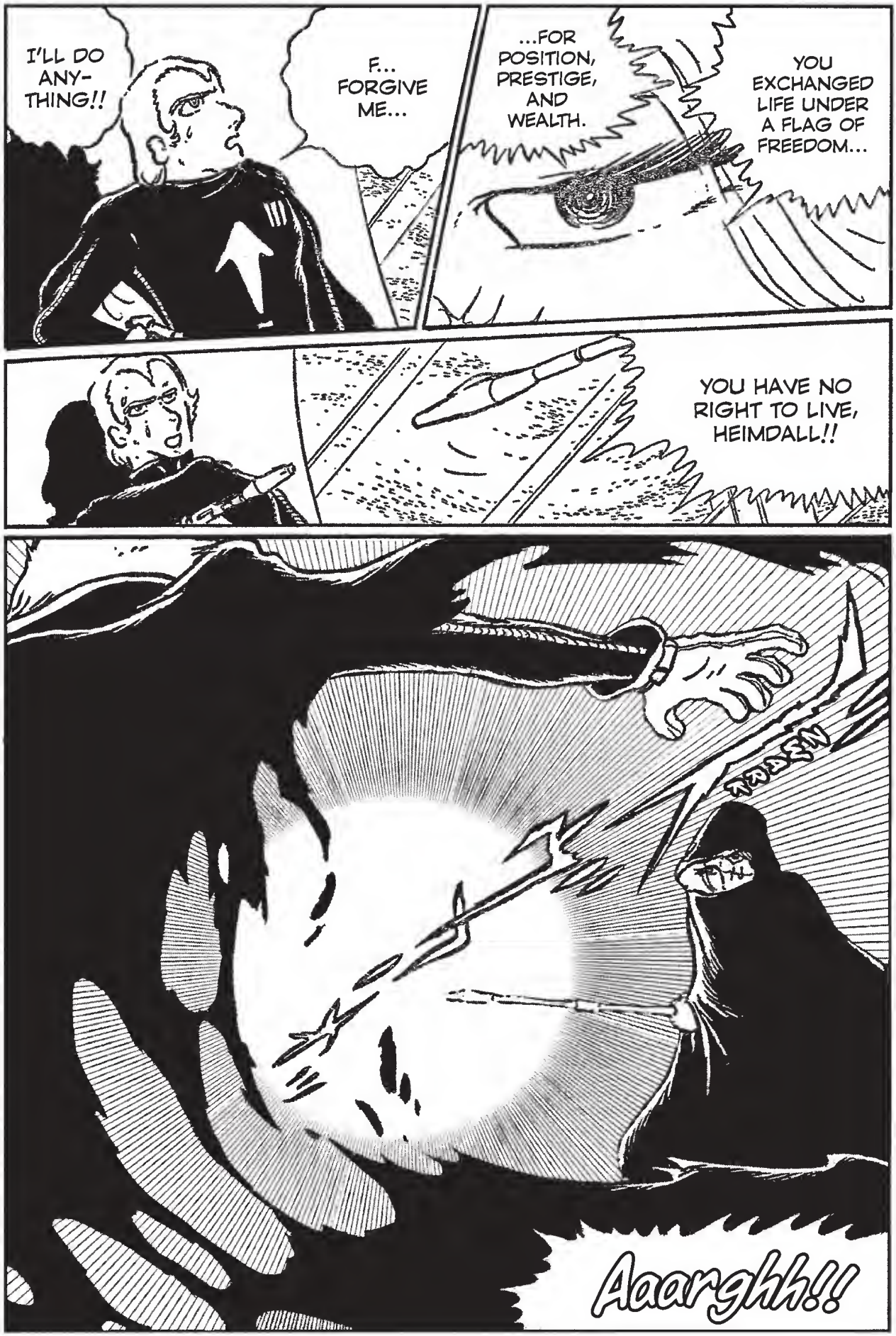

NOT EVEN HER BONES REMAIN...
MIGHT'VE USED TOO MUCH POWER...
...
I CAN'T IMAGINE WHAT MADE SO MANY TREMBLE AT HER NAME.
AH WELL... IN SPITE OF HER REPUTATION, SHE WAS A STUPID GIRL.
AND I CLAIM HER SHIP.
I KILLED EMERALDAS!!
LOOK! I BROUGHT HER DOWN!!

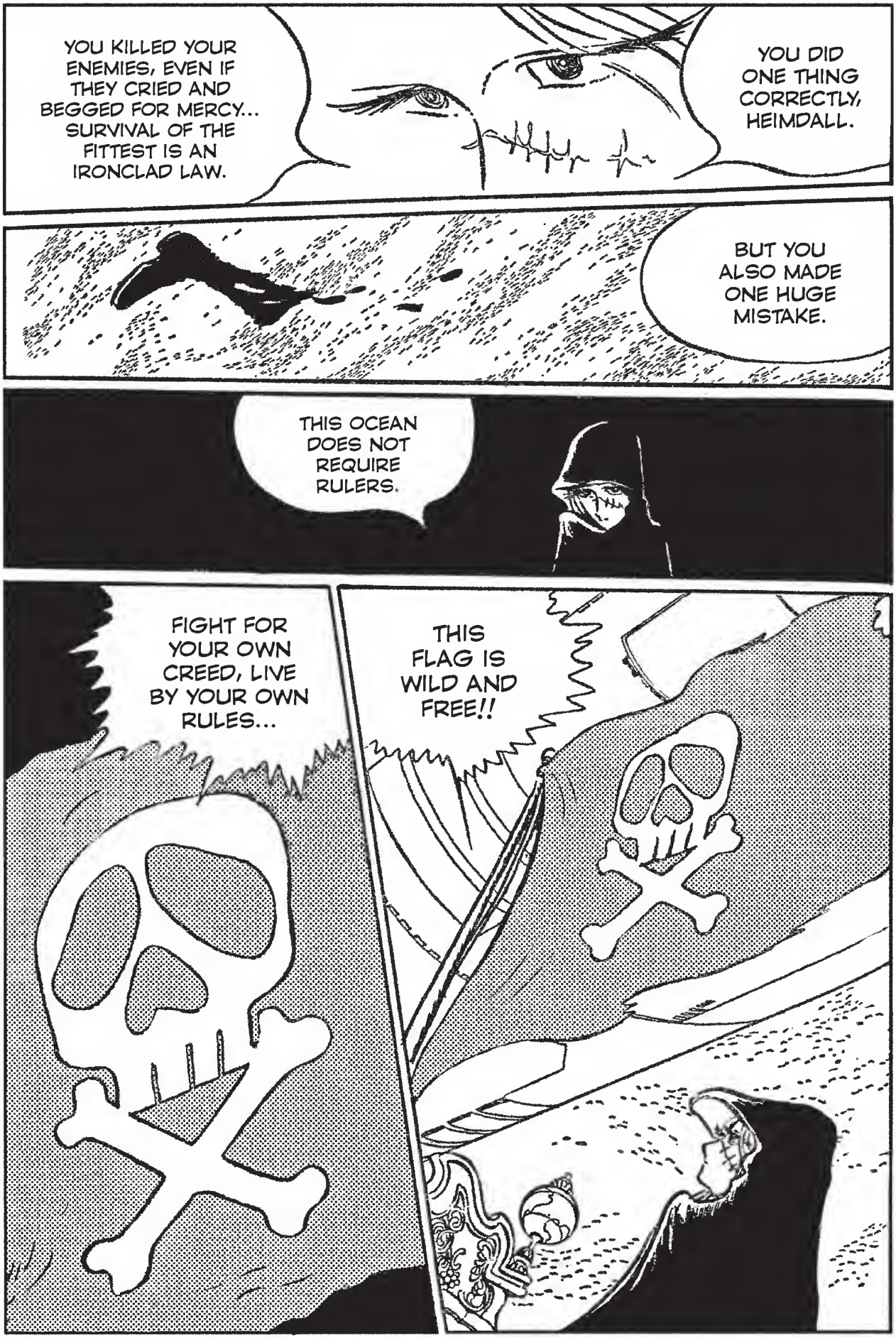

IT'S SOMEHOW AUTOMATICALLY LOCKED FROM THE INSIDE...
COMMANDER, THE HATCH WILL NOT OPEN.
AN AUTO LOCK...
THIS IS EXCELLENT WINE, BY THE WAY.
A BOMB MAKES A PERFECT KEY.
CHCK
CHCK
CHCK
CLICK
TO MY VICTORY!!

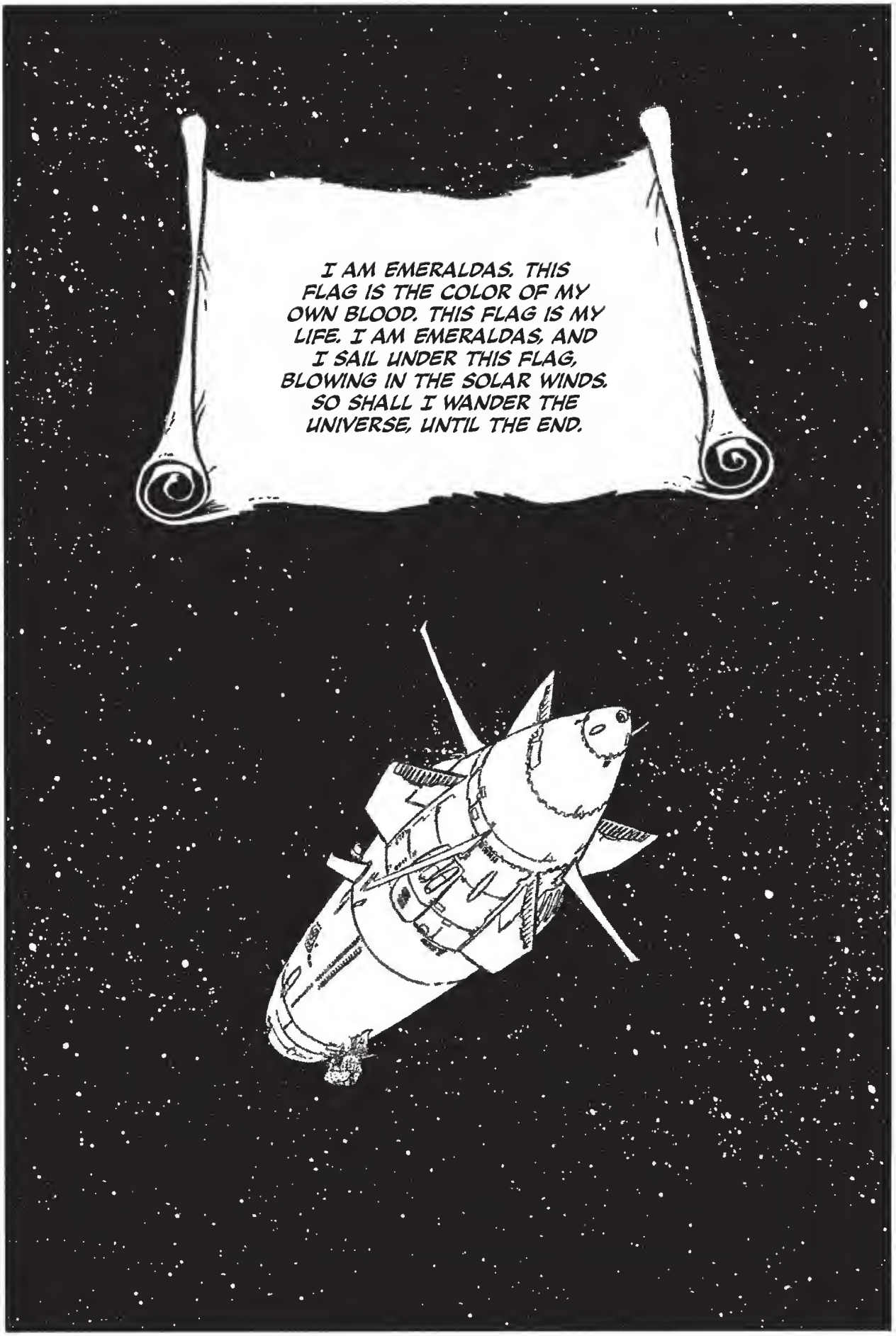

HEIMDALL.
YOU ARE QUITE ADEPT AT SHOOTING AT SHADOWS.
A DECOY?!
COWARD.
ABOUT TIME FOR OUR DUEL, DON'T YOU THINK?
F... FINE.
IT IS I, EMERALDAS.
EMER-ALDAS?
WHO DARES?!
click


YOU THINK?
NOW IT IS JUST THE TWO OF US.
MY SUBORDINATES WILL FIGHT FOR ME!
HA HA HA! I COMMAND HERE!
T... THEY'LL COME... MY COMMAND...
THEY FLED AT THE SIGHT OF MY SHIP. YOU ARE ABANDONED, HEIMDALL!
THEY'RE COWARDS. LIKE YOU.
THEY WON'T.
TOO SCARY. TOO SCARY.
AH...


YOU'VE SHOWN NO MERCY TOWARDS PIRATES. I WILL PAY YOU IN KIND. COWARD.
COWARDLY MEN DESERVE DEATH.
TO TESTIFY OF THE END OF HEIMDALL THE COWARD?
SHALL WE ASK YOUR ASSOCIATES TO STAND WITNESS?
NOT COMMANDANT. NOT SPACE WARRIOR. HEIMDALL THE COWARD IS ALL THAT WILL REMAIN.
IT'S ONLY BECAUSE YOU WERE A PIRATE YOURSELF, HEIMDALL, THAT YOU KNEW THEIR SPACELANES AND BATTLE TACTICS.
YOUR MASTERS, TO WHOM YOU SOLD YOUR SOUL.
PLEASE! SPARE ME!! I WAS JUST FOLLOWING ORDERS. THE EARTH GOVERN-MENT...


I'LL DO ANY-THING!!
F... FORGIVE ME...
...FOR POSITION, PRESTIGE, AND WEALTH.
YOU EXCHANGED LIFE UNDER A FLAG OF FREEDOM...
YOU HAVE NO RIGHT TO LIVE, HEIMDALL!!
TWANG
Aaarghh!!


YOU KILLED YOUR ENEMIES, EVEN IF THEY CRIED AND BEGGED FOR MERCY... SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST IS AN IRONCLAD LAW.
YOU DID ONE THING CORRECTLY, HEIMDALL.
BUT YOU ALSO MADE ONE HUGE MISTAKE.
THIS OCEAN DOES NOT REQUIRE RULERS.
FIGHT FOR YOUR OWN CREED, LIVE BY YOUR OWN RULES...
THIS FLAG IS WILD AND FREE!!


I AM EMERALDAS. THIS FLAG IS THE COLOR OF MY OWN BLOOD. THIS FLAG IS MY LIFE. I AM EMERALDAS, AND I SAIL UNDER THIS FLAG, BLOWING IN THE SOLAR WINDS. SO SHALL I WANDER THE UNIVERSE, UNTIL THE END.

THESE TWO SPECIAL SHORT STORIES ARE COLLECTED FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THIS VOLUME. THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPTS HAVE BEEN LOST, SO THESE WERE REPRINTED FROM THE PAGES OF SHONEN MAGAZINE #3-4, 1980, WITH PERMISSION OF THE ARTIST. OTHER MATERIALS ARE REPRINTED IN THE SECOND VOLUME OF THIS SERIES.

Queen Emeraldas 1

KODANSHA COMICS Digital Edition

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